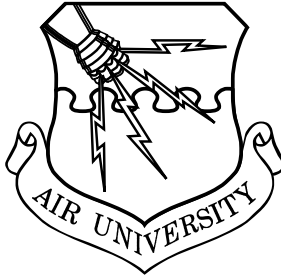




Letters of
Second Lieutenant
Charles Wesley Chapman, Jr.

December 19, 1894–May 3, 1918

AIR UNIVERSITY
AIR FORCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE



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Air Force Research Institute
Air University Press
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

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AIR FORCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

AIR UNIVERSITY PRESS

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<http://aupress.au.af.mil/>
<http://afri.au.af.mil/>



Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Chapman, Charles Wesley, Jr., 1894–1918.
Letters of Second Lieutenant Charles Wesley
Chapman, Jr., December 19, 1894–May 3, 1918.
pages cm
ISBN 978-1-58566-255-5

1. Chapman, Charles Wesley, Jr., 1894–1918—
Correspondence. 2. United States. Army. Aero
Squadron, 94th. 3. World War, 1914–1918—Personal
narratives, American. 4. Fighter pilots—United
States—Correspondence. 5. World War, 1914–
1918—Aerial operations, American. I. Title.

D570.794th .C47 2015
940.4'4973092—dc23

2015013478

Published by Air University Press in April 2016

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Original Foreword

Charles Wesley Chapman, known to all his friends as Carl, was born at Dubuque, Iowa, December 19th, 1894. He was killed in an aeroplane battle northeast of Toul, France, on May 3rd, 1918, and fell behind the German lines. He is buried near Remoncourt on the Franco-German border, but in French territory.

He was a Junior at Amherst College at the time he enlisted for service with the Franco-American Ambulance Corps, sailing for France on May 19th, 1917. On his arrival, he found that men for the Flying Corps were badly needed, so joined the French Army as a member of the Franco-American Flying Corps. He went through the French Schools at Avord, Pau, Cazaux, and Plessis-Belleville. In January, 1918, he transferred to the American Army and was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant, going to the front with the 94th Aero Squadron.

These letters are published so that his friends may have the story of his months in the Service in his own words.

Chapman's letters were published for private circulation in February 1919. This foreword is reproduced as it appeared in that volume.

Foreword to This Edition

When the United States entered World War I in April 1917, the American air force consisted of 56 pilots.¹ Some had seen active service as aviators during the 1916 Mexican Punitive Expedition. The single aero squadron that accompanied this expedition consisted of eight unarmed and underpowered airplanes that proved useless for their observation mission and wound up serving as a courier service for Gen John “Black Jack” Pershing.² Nevertheless, in the months after America’s entry into the Great War, an air-minded Congress approved the largest single appropriation in American history to that time: \$640 million to build a mighty air force. Headlines such as “Greatest of Aerial Fleets to Crush the Teutons” appeared in American newspapers.

Given this historic commitment of funds, the problem for the architects of American airpower was significant, for on hand were only a handful of qualified aviators, who were equipped with obsolete, unarmed airplanes. The fact that they were assigned to the aviation section of the US Army Signal Corps further underscored the scope of the problem. An American combat aviation arm did not exist. Training bases had to be built, modern combat aircraft had to be manufactured, and the right men had to be selected and trained to fly them. These tasks and many more had to be accomplished if American aviation units were to be ready for frontline service as part of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in France.

In contrast, the belligerents in the European war had made tremendous advances in military aviation, including the development of specialized aircraft for observation, bombardment, and pursuit. Observation aircraft provided important intelligence concerning the movement and massing of enemy forces and allowed accurate adjustment of artillery fire. (It was artillery, not machine guns or gas, which caused most of the casualties in the Great War.) Other aircraft delivered bombs and machine gun fire directly against enemy troops or civilian populations. For these reasons, each side struggled to secure mastery of the air. Because of its recognized importance, the war in the air urged new technical and organizational developments, especially in pursuit aviation, the branch charged with air superiority. By the time the United States declared war, a third generation of war-time fighters had been developed. These airplanes were capable of speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour and mounted a machine gun

FOREWORD TO THIS EDITION

that fired through the arc of the propeller by using a synchronizing mechanism.

Thus, the nascent American air arm lacked the right experience and technology. For the most part, the American aircraft industry failed to meet the challenge (a scandal, given the huge amount of funds spent, which triggered a series of congressional investigations in the 1920s). Most of the AEF's aircraft had to be purchased from the Western allies. The young men that were recruited for the Air Service, however, did meet the challenge. This is why the story of Lt Charles Chapman is important.

He was among the American volunteers who gained experience by flying with the British and French. Those volunteers provided a leavening of experience that was absolutely essential to the success of the AEF's Air Service. It was through them that the tactics and techniques learned by the Western allies through over four years of aerial warfare were transferred to the AEF. Chapman was among the first pilots who formed the 94th Aero Squadron, the first American-trained and American-led pursuit squadron to begin operations on the front. His journey, from student-athlete at a prestigious university to the cockpit of one of the most advanced fighter aircraft of his time, was similar to the path of many who volunteered twice: first to fly with the French Air Service, and again to join the AEF Air Service when it needed them. His letters thus provide an intimate portrait that helps explain the earliest parts of the story of the birth of American air-power in the Great War.



Bert Frandsen
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September 2014

Notes

1. Juliette A. Hennessy, *The United States Army Air Arm: April 1861 to April 1917* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1985), 196.
2. Herbert Malloy Mason, Jr., *The Great Pursuit: Pershing's Expedition to Destroy Pancho Villa* (New York: Smithmark Publishers, Inc., 1995), 103–09; John S. D. Eisenhower, *Intervention: The United States and the Mexican Revolution, 1913–1917* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993), 239, 254–57, 262–63, 276.

Introduction

Charles Wesley “Carl” Chapman, Jr., of Waterloo, Iowa, observed his 22nd birthday in France as a newly minted pilot in the Lafayette Flying Corps of the French Air Service. Contrasting this day with boyhood memories of going down to breakfast to “find a jackknife, a miniature railway, candy, a dollar under the plate from Uncle O,” and other treasures, he marveled at how his life had changed in the last few months and wondered where he would spend his next birthday. Chapman was one of 223 Americans who earned the brevet of a French aviator between 1915 and 1917. They flew for “France and civilization,” and a number of them became part of the initial cadre of the American Air Service in France during the winter of 1917–18. In May 1918 Chapman was wearing the wings of an American aviator when he was shot down over German territory, becoming the first member of the famed 94th Aero Squadron to be killed in combat.

Chapman captured his impressions of flying and the Great War in the air in a series of letters and diary entries that comprise this volume. They and other supporting materials were originally compiled and printed in 1919 by his parents as a memorial to the fallen hero. What may be the only existing original copy of this book was presented to the US Air Force by the Lafayette Escadrille Memorial Foundation for safekeeping at the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. At the same time, former Air Force chief of staff Gen Michael Moseley had 10 facsimile copies printed for limited distribution. In the original volume, Chapman’s letters and diary entries were arranged chronologically and formed a remarkably coherent narrative. This edition makes this story available to a wider readership.

Readers will find Chapman to have been a gifted storyteller with an unconventional perspective on the war. From his first day in France, he was a keen and empathetic observer of a nation that had been at war for nearly three years. “There is a lot I could tell you about the war,” he confided to his father in one of his first letters home, “but I am afraid the censor would cut it out. Suffice it to say that things are a lot more serious than we thought before we came over.” Within the censor’s rules, he tried to tell the folks back home just how serious things were. He affected and then personified the French soldier’s sense of boredom with and cynicism about the war and military life. At the same time, he shared news of his adventures as an innocent

INTRODUCTION

abroad and commentary on his progress as a fledgling Airman with grace and self-deprecating humor. His was a story of discovery.

Looking back we read this story with the knowledge of what aviation and airpower became in the decades that followed. Chapman's experience reminds us that nearly everything about flying machines and flying was new, tentative, and dangerous in the beginning. He and others like him were discovering what the airplane could do in war. At the risk of hyperbole, it can also be said that in testing his limits and the limits of his machine, he was discovering a great deal about who he was and wished to become.

Carl Chapman was born in Dubuque, Iowa, on 19 December 1894 and grew up in Waterloo. His family was well off. His father started a lumber business that prospered in the town's economic and population boom, which had begun shortly before the turn of the twentieth century. With two older brothers and an older sister, he was the baby of the family, and he seemed to have had an ideal childhood. He was a superb student and captained the football team his senior year at West High. While not a "sensational performer" as a halfback, he was nonetheless remembered as "very consistent in his play and . . . one of the best offensive backfield men ever" at his alma mater.¹ In 1914 he entered a prestigious eastern college, Amherst, at a time when very few young men attended college at all.

During his freshman year, America watched with a mixture of horror, fascination, and detachment as a European conflict became a world war that would consume the lives of millions. We have no record of his reaction to these events, but war at a distance has a certain attraction for young men like Chapman. This and a sense that his country would someday be at war may have prompted his volunteering for one of the citizens' training camps. The camps were established by civilian preparedness advocates with War Department support to give young men a taste of military life. In the summer of 1916, between his sophomore and junior years at Amherst, "Private" Carl Chapman spent five weeks at the first of these camps at Plattsburg, New York.

The Great War was well into its third year when he and an Amherst chum, William Loomis, traveled to Boston to sign on as ambulance drivers for the American Field Service (AFS) in France. American expatriates in Paris had established the AFS early in the war as an independent organization to support the French armies by transporting the wounded to hospitals and later carrying munitions and sup-

plies to the front. Volunteers were considered noncombatants and thus could serve without compromising US neutrality. The opportunity to serve an increasingly popular Allied cause and see the war close at hand no doubt drew Chapman and his friend to the recruiter's office. By the time they had completed their applications and a short auto mechanics course, the United States was at war. Chapman sailed from New York on a French transport along with a contingent of AFS men on 19 May 1917.

France and its army were in crisis as the SS *Mongolia* docked in Bordeaux on 30 May. Ten percent of French territory had been under German occupation since 1914. A war-weary people was losing faith in France and the hope of victory, for good reason. The western front was at a stalemate; the military art had broken down, and soldiers were subject to the resulting miseries of trench warfare. The only result of the latest offensive designed to break the deadlock was more than 300,000 Allied casualties, 187,000 of them French. Discipline in the French army was breaking down; widespread insubordination—even cases of outright mutiny—was reported in two-thirds of front-line divisions. A new commander-in-chief, Marshal Philippe Pétain, restored order, improved soldiers' living conditions, went on the defensive, and waited for the American army to arrive.

Chapman arrived in Paris a month before Gen John J. Pershing, US Army, and the advanced echelon of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). He and the other AFS volunteers were billeted in a beautiful old chateau and reported to the AFS reception center. There he learned that an ambulance driver's life was "comparatively unimportant," as drivers and the regiments to which they were assigned saw action only one month out of five. An alternative was service as a truck driver, which he considered "a day laborer's job" too far behind the front lines. He wanted to see and be part of the war. The physician who provided his physical exam offered him an opportunity to do just that. Dr. Edmund Gros had been instrumental in establishing the Franco-American or Lafayette Flying Corps and arranged for Chapman, Loomis, and John Cotton to enlist in the French Foreign Legion and learn to fly. Depending on vacancies and how well they did in flight training, the three young Americans had a good chance of becoming pursuit (or fighter) pilots and even joining the elite ranks of the Lafayette Escadrille.

The iconic Lafayette Escadrille still has a certain cachet today. From the beginning, its exploits in the air were the subject of French

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propaganda and the stuff of legends. It is useful to point out that the Lafayette Escadrille was the original pursuit squadron, established in February 1916 under the administration of the Franco-American Flying Corps. At the time Chapman enlisted, it was becoming likely that most American aviators would be transferred to the US Army Air Service that was being established in France.

With less than two weeks in Paris, Chapman was off to the great French aerodrome at Avord for flight school. Avord was reputed to be the largest flying school in the world at the time, with 1,000 student pilots and 1,300 aircraft. The school issued him his flying kit and gave him to an instructor pilot (called a monitor), who guided his student with the help of an interpreter. On average it took about six months to complete the course. By the end, student pilots had spent 47 hours in the air. Even adding time devoted to ground training and general military duties, students still had a great deal of free time. We are fortunate that Chapman devoted at least some of this time to chronicling his adventures in his correspondence and diary.

Chapman devotes a great deal of this effort to describing his experience as a student pilot. As we read these accounts, it is important to understand that the French approach to primary flight training was very different from that employed today. The most striking difference was that the monitor never flew with the student; the student was alone at the controls of his aircraft from his first day in the cockpit. The syllabus can best be described as taxi, hop, and fly. The training aircraft for those destined for fighter squadrons was a single-seat Bleriot monoplane that defined the state of the art in 1913.

The first Bleriot Type 11 trainer was a clipped-winged flightless bird nicknamed the Penguin, also known as the Grass Cutter, in which students crossed the field at full throttle with the tail up to learn rudder control and get a sense of how the plane would feel in level flight. Then they transitioned to a second flight-capable Bleriot Type 11-1 for the *rouler* (to roll) phase. Here the goal was to zip across the field without actually getting airborne, turn around, and do it again. That mastered, students were allowed to take off on short hops progressively higher and longer until they were doing something that resembled flying the aircraft in a straight line. This was called *décolle* (take off) and *pique* (dive). Then came *tour de piste*, a flight halfway around the field, followed by practicing spirals. At the end of this primary training, students completed two 150-mile cross-country flights known as *le grand voyage*.

In retrospect, the French system seems logical and simple. Chapman's experience would demonstrate that it was not without its hazards, however. On 30 October 1917, he was awarded the brevet and badge of a French military aviator and a promotion to sergeant. Chapman was one of over 5,600 pilots trained for the French Air Service in 1917. He had done well enough to stay on course for assignment to the Lafayette Escadrille or another French pursuit squadron.

Three days before Thanksgiving, he reported to Pau, an airfield just north of the Pyrenees, for acrobatic and combat training in the Nieuport 17, an obsolescent pursuit ship no longer flown at the front. During the autumn, the rumors that the members of the Lafayette Flying Corps would be transferred to the American Army became fact. The transfer and a second lieutenant's commission required five letters of recommendation and the usual red tape; Chapman hoped to spend some time at the front with a veteran French escadrille while the paperwork made its way through channels. When his commission was signed on 8 February 1918, he was at an airfield near Plessis-Belleville transitioning to the SPAD XIII, the newest and hottest of the French pursuit planes.

His journey from the Penguin to the SPAD illustrated the great advances in military aviation stimulated by the war. In 1909 Louis Bleriot completed the first flight across the English Channel in a Type 11 monoplane nearly identical to the one Chapman had learned to fly. It was still state of the art and the workhorse of French aerial reconnaissance in the first year of the Great War. With a 50-horsepower engine, it had a top speed of 47 miles per hour (mph) and a service ceiling of 3,200 feet. This was more than adequate for the reconnaissance and artillery spotting that were the primary military uses of airplanes in 1914. By 1916 air forces were performing most of the modern doctrinal functions of airpower—counterair, strategic attack, counterland (interdiction and air support), reconnaissance, and mobility—with aircraft specifically designed for those purposes. At the end of 1917, when Chapman earned his brevet, average aircraft speed and service ceilings had tripled, largely as a result of great advances in power plants. The fighter and the fighter pilot were the icons of combat aviation at this time. Chapman completed his flight training in arguably the most iconic Allied fighter plane of the war, the SPAD XIII. Its eight-cylinder, 220-horsepower engine gave it a maximum speed of 135 mph and a service ceiling of nearly 22,000 feet. The contrast with the Bleriot 11 was remarkable.

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Chapman was one of 223 Americans who earned the military aviator's brevet in the Lafayette Flying Corps. Of these, 43 flew with the Lafayette Escadrille and another 144 with other French frontline squadrons. Thirty-five, including Chapman, were never posted to an operational squadron. They joined 57 Lafayette Flying Corps veterans in transferring to what would become the Aviation Service of the AEF in France.

Lieutenant Chapman spent a few days as an instructor at the large American training base at Issoudun before he was assigned to the 94th Aero Squadron of the First Pursuit Group in the first week of March. The Hat in the Ring squadron would become the most celebrated American flying unit of the war. A large percentage of the initial cadre were Lafayette Flying Corps veterans, including flight commanders James Norman Hall and David Peterson, who had flown with the Lafayette Escadrille, and Loomis. The many tasks required to establish a flying squadron—including receiving its first complement of Nieuport 28-C1 fighters—consumed the month of March. The squadron took possession of Gengoult Aerodrome near Toul on 9 April 1918. The “Toul sector” of the front had been quiet since 1915, a good place for a green squadron to learn a new aircraft and the business of aerial combat.

Chapman was an enthusiastic learner. He flew his first of only four combat patrols on 20 April 1918. On 3 May 1918, while on patrol with his flight leader David Peterson, Eddie Rickenbacker, Phillip Davis, and his good friend William Loomis, Chapman destroyed a German Albatross before he was shot down over German territory. The details of the fight are sketchy, but apparently he was in pursuit of a second aircraft when he flew into the sights of the pilot who downed him. According to the squadron adjutant, his death was “avenged” a few minutes later by another member of the flight. Because the rules at the time required that all aerial kills be confirmed by French or American ground observers, he did not receive credit for his victory.

He was the first member of the 94th Aero Squadron to be killed by the enemy. “All the boys feel very blue,” noted Rickenbacker, “but [such things] must be expected.” Indeed, Davis was killed a month later. Hall echoed this fighter pilot fatalism in his comments:

Poor Chapman had tough luck. He's the first now. It's a gamble who will be next, but no one here is worrying. It's a great life while it lasts. There's nothing like it. We never think of the danger. You see an enemy machine and you get it or it gets you. It's as certain for one as for the other.

The Germans buried Chapman with honors. His family and community mourned and eulogized the first Waterloo lad to die in the world war. His was the first name in the Hall of Fame in the new library at Amherst College. He was awarded the French Croix de Guerre with Palm and the American Distinguished Service Cross. In 1928 he was reburied in the Lafayette Escadrille Memorial cemetery near Paris, where he lies with 67 other Americans who flew and died for France and civilization.

As a personal comment, I would like to note just how much I have enjoyed getting to know Chapman and seeing the Great War and the birth of military aviation through his eyes. When I was 12, I thought I had learned all I needed to know about both from reading Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall's 1929 novel, *The Falcons of France: A Tale of Youth and the Air*, which was based closely on their adventures as pilots in the Lafayette Escadrille. It captured the "great life" of the fighter pilot and remains the archetype of the World War I "knights of the air" story. Even though it is a bit of a potboiler, it is still real enough and a great read.

Had he survived, Carl Chapman may have written a memoir or added his own tale of youth and the air to the novels that captured the imagination of readers in the 1920s. The stories, observations, and insights contained in this volume show great promise of his having done this.



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September 2014

Note

1. See the bibliographic note on sources following this introduction.

Bibliographic Note

This note has two purposes. First, it highlights the principal sources used in preparing the introduction and the notes for this volume. Second, it recommends these works to those who would like to read more about the Great War in the air. The material on Chapman's family and early life came from two online sources: his obituary in the *Waterloo Evening Courier*, 4 May 1918, accessed on 12 January 2013, <http://iagenweb.org/boards/blackhawk/obituaries/index.cgi?read=281986>, which blends local reporting with Associated Press reports of Chapman's death in combat; and Edgar Harlan's biographical sketch of Chapman's father in *A Narrative History of the People of Iowa* (1931), also accessed on 12 January 2013, <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/IA-IRISH/2004-06/1087251937>.

The place to start for any detailed examination of World War I aviation is John H. Morrow, Jr., *The Great War in the Air: Military Aviation from 1909 to 1921* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993). Morrow's long-time colleague at the University of Georgia, Lee Kennett, provides an equally scholarly but more accessible narrative in *The First Air War, 1914–18* (New York: Free Press, 1991). The sources for the Lafayette Flying Corps and the Escadrille are legion. Herbert Molly Mason, Jr., in *The Lafayette Escadrille* (New York: Random House, 1964), provides a superb narrative based on archival research and interviews with surviving members of the Lafayette Flying Corps. Appendices provide a glossary of French-English aviation terms and a 1918 tactical guide given to French pursuit pilots. More recent is the short volume done for the Air Force History and Museums Program by Roger G. Miller, *Like a Thunderbolt: The Lafayette Escadrille and the Advent of American Pursuit Aviation* (Washington, DC, 2007), which places its subject in the wider context of the development of the Army Air Service and its contribution to victory in the World War. Dennis Gordon, in *The Lafayette Flying Corps: The American Volunteers in the French Air Service in World War One* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer, 2003), offers biographical sketches, some of which are quite lengthy, of each of the volunteers. The two standard works on the American Air Service in World War I are James J. Huston, *Hostile Skies: A Combat History of the American Air Service in World War I* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1968), and James J. Cooke,

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

The U.S. Air Service in the Great War, 1917–1919 (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996). And the definitive study of the 94th Aero Squadron and the 1st Pursuit Group is Bert Frandsen, *Hat in the Ring: The Birth of American Air Power in the Great War* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2003), which is arguably the best book on American airpower in the World War.

Editorial Note

The letters, official papers, commentary, and addenda have been transcribed verbatim from the edition prepared in February 1919 for private circulation. In the interest of historical accuracy, we have retained even obvious errors and, in one case, an unfortunate racial epithet.

We do not have access to the original photographs or French documents printed in the February 1919 edition. Because of their historical interest, we have reproduced the photographs and documents from the printed book and ask the reader to forgive the imperfect quality of those reproductions.



LETTERS

CLASS OF SERVICE SYMBOL		CLASS OF SERVICE SYMBOL	
Day Message	Blue	Day Message	Blue
Day Letter	Blue	Day Letter	Blue
Night Message	Red	Night Message	Red
Night Letter	Red	Night Letter	Red

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT GEORGE W. E. ATKINS, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

RECEIVED AT 9 B SA 16

WATERLOO IOWA 1019 A M 19

C W CHAPMAN JR

PHI DELTA THETA

GO AHEAD AND ENLIST WRITE AT ONCE WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS
YOU WANT ME TO GET FOR YOU

C W CHAPMAN
1155 A M

DEAR DAD:

Sunday.

I received your telegram and have gone ahead with things. Went down to Boston yesterday to have a final talk with the man at the head of the Ambulance Department. There was a point that I wanted to settle before I signed the papers—how long it would be before I could sail. I found, to my satisfaction, that I could sail on May 19th. I decided that I had to stay around here until the OLIO comes out even if I had to give up the France proposition. As it will probably be out on the 18th I can get everything going in good shape for the advertising manager who will take care of what else has to be done. I am sending in my application tomorrow—have to find the exact size of my foot so will have to hold it up till then. You send me my birth certificate; that will be all, that I know of, that you can do. I am handing in for moral standing, etc., the following names: Uncle Ed, they wanted a man in New York, Mr. Little, Mr. Nauman, George Williams, Mr. Sias, and Mr. Reed. You might tell them to hurry back their replies.

I had another talk with Ames, the Amherst man that just got back from France, and he said that we would have some hard work, some dull work, a lot of interesting experiences, and would not be in any degree of danger. Tell Mother not to worry about her son. I am enclosing you some blanks that you can keep. There was one other point that I satisfied myself on when in Boston. I wondered if I could be of more value as a soldier in this country, now that we

have declared war, than if I went to France as an ambulance driver. To satisfy me on this point Mr. Sleeper showed me a letter from Sec. Baker stating that he considered the ambulance of great value and urged them to go right on with it. I will write you any developments.

With Love, CARL.

P. S.—I got your check O. K. and am ever so much obliged. If you have not got a birth certificate send an affidavit of my birth. I am beginning to study French and Ford engines.



DEAR DAD:

Freeman Swett has decided to go to France with me. We are getting credit for our work from the Dean tonight. Friday we are going down to Boston and make our final arrangements. We are going to work in a Ford factory for a few hours each day and try to pick up some



"CHAP"

knowledge of the Ford. We will get our passports, certificates of health and be vaccinated there. I wish that you would send those six letters of recommendation to the A. M. Ambulance Headquarters, 40 State St., Boston, as soon as you can. I find that I have to get them myself so I wish that you would find six men to recommend me and send their letters on. I have been assigned to sail the 19th of May so won't have any too much time. Also don't forget my birth certificate or affidavit. How did you like the picture of the dog? I don't know what I shall do with him yet, but will leave

him here for the present. Ask Mother if she wants me to send him home. How was Sis's party? With love, Carl.

P. S.—If I have been vaccinated within the last seven years will you please get a certificate to that effect. I don't remember of being vaccinated since I was a kid about ten years old. You can address my letters here and I will have them forwarded if I am not here at the time.



DEAR MOTHER:

I have most everything fixed up and am going to Boston tomorrow to start work in a garage. I expect to be at Free's, 1362 Beacon St., Brookline, Mass., so you can address me there. I have to come back here once or twice to see about the Olio. I am going to leave all my things, with the exception of my dress suit, which I shall send home, that I do not take, here at the school. I guess that I will send Chap home unless I find some one here who wants him. What do you hear from Joe? Has he left Duluth?

Love, CARL.



May 19, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

We are now sailing down the North River and will soon be out in the open ocean. I had quite a scramble getting aboard but as far as I know I got everything, even my pajamas and tooth brush.

I got my trunk and packages on about two o'clock and then went out to get something to eat, thought it might be my last good meal. I got back to the boat at two-thirty and settled down to read my steamer letters. I opened Dad's at about a quarter to three and found a fifty-dollar check. I had to dask off the boat to get it cashed but managed to get back in time.

Just before we pulled out the "Mongolia" with Mr. Balfour's—at least some one said so—party and a big Hospital Unit on board went out. As we went out the friends of those on board stood on the pier and waved their handkerchiefs until we were out of sight. I think that I am glad that I had no friends there. All the way down the river we were saluted by the boats and given a "Bon Voyage" from every one we passed. Three æroplanes were flying around over head so that, with the many other interesting sights, we had a fine start.

There are a lot of French soldiers on board and they are quite interesting, dressed up in their light blue uniforms, blue felt puttees and red and blue caps—some have their steel helmets. I haven't picked up quite enough French yet to talk with them but expect to be quite chummy before the voyage is over. One of them came aboard a little

the worse for wear, waving a French flag in one hand and an American in the other. He looked like he had been on quite a lark—suppose he thot it might be his last.

The pilot is going to take this off. I got all the letters O. K. CARL.



On Board Ship, May 19, 1917.

BEAUTIFUL WEATHER,

The boat did not sail until three but we reached the dock at one so as to get our baggage on board and try to see the purser so as to get together in one state room. I had good luck or else I looked like an easy tip—and got a trunk man to take my baggage—after a trunk inspector had asked me to fess up and tell how many guns I had stowed away and had run his hands through my trunk and bag. Then I went out and had a lunch at a “tars” restaurant and had quite a feed. I did not know but that it would be the last time I would have an appetite until I reached Bordeaux. I went back to the ship and went thro the long rig-a-marole of having my passport signed and countersigned about ten times. They were certainly suspicious of everyone. I was disappointed when the passport agent looked at my passport picture and then at me and immediately recognized me. I never claimed to be handsome but certainly thought I looked better than that picture. If you wish to see yourself as others see you get a passport picture. Just fifteen minutes before we sailed I found a check in a letter from Dad. I dashed around to find the purser to see if he would cash it but he wouldn’t. Thought it worth fifty to take a chance on missing the boat so made a run for the superintendent’s office and got it cashed in time to get back on board again.

When we pulled out the Harvard boys gave a couple of cheers just by way of keeping up their spirits. The friends on dock waved and shouted to us as we slowly backed out into the river with the tug boats pushing hard on the fore end to bring her around. As we sailed down the river all the boats and tugs tooted a “Bon Voyage” making us feel pretty important. About an hour’s ride down the river, after we had passed out of sight of New York and we were well out in the open, we slowed down to let the pilot off. He took all the mail that had been written in the first hour. I sent a telegram so didn’t write.



On Ship Board, May 20, 1917.

A LITTLE FOGGY:

I was interrupted last night by Free asking me to play a game of cards. He also reminded me that I had only three pads to last me through the trip and at the rate I was writing the first day I would have them used up before the end of the voyage. The boat seems to be a pretty good one and I trust will get us thro any storms we may encounter and over any submarines we may meet.

Speaking of submarines Jerry Barnes and I discussed all the possible reactions of this ship to a torpedo and decided that she would float at least five minutes no matter where she was struck. This would give us ample time to climb into a life belt and get aboard our designated life boat. Thank heavens there are not a lot of women aboard to have to wait for. Women on floating ships are right nice to have about, but when it comes to a sinking one I prefer to have them somewhere else. As I was saying the boat seems sea worthy. She is a 1700 tonner and rides the sea—at least so far—very easily. The most interesting people on board are the French soldiers. I haven't gotten a hold on my French sufficiently to chat with them but Jerry and I are going to organize a class and expect in a few days to be able to converse with the best of them. We also hope to be able to get what we think we ordered at the table.

There are a couple of old warriors on board who look as though they might have seven or eight German scalps between them. They are wearing their blue coats, their oiled shoes, blue felt puttees, and steel grey helmets. There are seven or eight fine looking French officers all of whom must be returning from a leave of absence.

The Ambulance men are a typical American College crowd, a free, easy going and jolly crew that might be out for an excursion trip.

Can't say much for our room. It is down on the bottom floor and about fifteen feet above the water. I feel as though I were stowed away like goods the Captain was smuggling. The room is about seven feet long, seven high and seven wide. This sounds ample enough but the four men, four trunks and four berths can just get in, that is providing three men are in bed. We have arranged a fixed order of things for

getting up and going to bed. No more than one man is in the process of dressing at the same time.

I figure that if a torpedo hits us it will make a nice opening in our room so that all we have to do is to grab a life belt and float out. I had my first experience with a French menu this morning. I saw something on the card that looked like coffee and boiled eggs, and thought I would take a chance on the “soupe d’ognons.” I got the boiled eggs all right but got hot milk for coffee and bread soaked in water and onion juice for my “soupe d’ognons” a fine dish for breakfast.

I was talking with a young French officer this morning who told me that he was returning to France after a three week’s leave of absence. They get three weeks out of every year. He has lived in the United States for a number of years so could speak English fairly well—(very few can). He said that at Verdun at one time, after a stay of a couple of days in the trenches, 8290 of his regiment had been lost. A great many had disappeared in the mud which had been made soft by continuous shell fire and rain. He commented that that was a very bad death.

As I was walking around the deck tonight I came across a very animated group of fellows who were cheering four of the French soldiers who had come up from the steerage to our deck. The steward was trying to put them back in the steerage but the soldiers were protesting vigorously. They kept saying that they were going back to fight in the first trenches and could not see why they should not ride in the first class. The fellows took their side. The soldiers were drunk enough to feel happy. One soldier pointed out his two arm bands, which show the number of years’ record, and told us that he was going back to the front to fight it out. The crowd of fellows around him laughed at the attempt of one to speak French and the soldier thought they were laughing at him. He swore blue blazes and said that they would learn that two years in a trench was no laughing matter.

May 21—On board (beautiful day) wind high but sky clear. I got a real job this morning. The purser wanted a man to typewrite the news of the day received last night by wireless, so I applied. It took me about an hour to do it, not that there was very much but I could not get the machine adjusted. I was also interrupted by a French cabin-boy who treated me to a glass of diluted wine. I reciprocated with a cigarette and a cigar. He couldn’t talk English so I was forced to try out my French on him. We managed quite a chat. I promised to look him up tonight and expect to have another good chance to “brush up.”

I got so interested in a crap game this morning that I missed my turn at lunch and nearly missed out, but after the head waiter cussed me out (I suppose that was what he was doing) he managed to find me a place. I haven't got on to this game of craps enough to take a hand, but expect to take a flyer before long. I'll hunt up a nice quiet game to try out on. That one this morning was going at the rate of one dollar, two dollars or even five—too much for my slender purse. We had a life-boat practice this morning, at least we put on our life belts and stood near our boats.

May 27—On board (clear as a bell). As you see by the date I have been lying low for the last few days. We had *some* rough weather (I suppose an old tar would call it a "breeze") and the boat tipped and tilted and rolled until it got into my system. However all the low lying are feeling all right now and expect to weather the rest of the trip like good sailors. These French certainly make a lot of racket on this boat. When four of them get into a game of cards you might as well leave the room if you want to do anything but watch them. It is amusing to watch them for a while but no vaudeville show can fascinate you for a week straight. Everybody is talking of submarines. I have heard at least forty-seven conflicting stories as to how they work and what results they have. We in our room decided that from now on we will carry our life belts with us, having to go down to our cubby hole with the boat sinking is not our idea of a pleasant walk. I won three dollars in a poker game last night. Don't get worried. This was my virgin attempt. I didn't intend to get into the game at all but the fellows were betting so foolishly that I figured it easy money.

* * *

Bordeaux, May 30th—Cable, "Landed safely."

* * *

June 5, 1917.

DEAR DAD:

Things have been moving so fast since I landed in this country that I have let my letters go. The news of greatest importance is that I am not an ambulance driver. When we arrived at our headquarters here

in Paris, we were told that on account of the small output of ambulance bodies and the demand for men for driving ammunition trucks, that we were all to be shifted to that service. Naturally the gang was pretty “huffy” about it and began to scurry around to find out the “dope” on the situation from some one outside of the ambulance organization.

After two or three days of hunting information (or listening to the ones that had gotten hold of some) I came to the conclusion that aviation was the only thing to go into. I could have gone into ambulance work with another organization, but since getting over here I have found that it is comparatively unimportant—ambulance units go with their regiments and the average regiment is idle four months out of five; this means that the ambulance unit is idle for, often times, four months at a time.

The truck driving, camion service, is important and men are needed, but it is a day laborer’s job—besides this one never sees anything of the war as you drive a good distance behind the lines. Dr. Gros, the doctor who gave me my physical examination, said that there was no doubt but that I would be of far more service in aviation. John Cotton, William Loomis and myself have passed our examinations and are waiting for our final papers, which we expect in about five days. We get much better treatment in this new field. Besides giving us real quarters to live in, and real food to live on, we get a salary of about \$55 a month.

There is also a certain amount of distinction in belonging to the Lafayette Escadrille, which is part of the Franco-American Flying Corps, which is very pleasing to one’s vanity. From here we go to the southern part of France for our training. In this season, when one can fly most every day, it takes from two to three months to get a pilot’s license—a good many never get one but become observers, bomb-droppers, etc.

(Going back). We arrived at Bordeaux at about 2:00 P. M. and spent a couple of hours getting our baggage off the boat and ourselves over to the station. Soldiers are everywhere. We sat down at a restaurant near the station and watched them go by, all entraining for the front. They all had their knapsacks, three or four of them, chuck full of things to eat, and most all carried one of these long hard loaves of bread, that might be used for a weapon, under their arms. We rode all night, in a third-class car, in order to reach Paris. That was certainly an interesting ride. We drank wine and sang songs until about 2:00

A. M. to keep up our spirits and spent the rest of the night trying to converse with a French soldier who jumped in with us. He was a young fellow, about twenty, who was going back to the front after a couple of weeks leave of absence.

We finally reached Paris and our temporary, (more temporary than we expected), quarters at 21 Rue Raymouand. That is certainly a beautiful spot. It is an old chateau which has been donated for ambulance men. The rumor goes that Ben. Franklin used it for his home while in Paris. The chateau itself might have been a pleasant place to live in, but I myself would prefer an American bungalow with parlor, sitting room, bed room and kitchen in the space taken up by one of the main rooms in this chateau. It might be made into an attractive establishment if tapestries, pictures, furniture, etc., were put in, but I wouldn't want to spend much money in taking a chance. The grounds, tho, are beautiful. Fine old trees and subterranean passages through which, rumor has it, the inhabitants of the chateau escaped during the revolution, gives it quite a romantic air.

We have been "taking in" the city and begin to feel almost "at home." There is a lot I could tell you about the war, but I am afraid that the censor would cut it out. Suffice to say that things are a lot more serious than we thought before we came over.

As soon as I get my tailor-made uniform, I will have my picture taken and send you one—I expect to look very "classy."

After this, send my mail to Franco-American Flying Corps, c-o Dr. Edmund L. Gros, 23 Ave., du Bois de Boulogne, Paris.

If you receive my letters tell me, so I can tell what news you are getting.

With love, CARL.

* * *

June 11, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I found out tonight that we will probably have to be here for ten days more. Some of the fellows that have gotten their final papers have been here for a week, and as we do not expect to have these papers for a couple of days, I expect that our sojourn here will be somewhat prolonged. I am getting quite tired of this Parisian life. We have

taken in most of the sights so have nothing to do but drink lemonade at the street-walk cafes and watch the girls go by.

When we first came here, we sort of felt that we were walking on holy ground; the home of Napoleon, Louis XIV, Victor Hugo and all the rest. We used to gaze in wonder at every building and statue and we were continually racking our brains in an attempt to remember our history. But now we don't bother about these things. We can walk through the Arc de Triomphe and never think of Napoleon, or down the Champs Elysee and never have a thought of the Grand Army,—the Place de la Madeleine is only a place to catch a car, while the Bastille is only the end of the Madeleine-Bastille bus line; even mention of Versailles does not give us the old thrill. So Paris to us has become only a place of theatres and bum looking girls.

Like all Parisians, we carry canes. For the first day or so that I carried it, I felt as though everyone on the street was looking at me, but now I strut down the street and swing my cane as though I was born with one in my hand. As soon as I get my uniform—a blue French uniform—I will have to carry gloves as well as a cane, all respectable French officers carry them.

John and Bill have gotten their uniforms—they got khaki-colored ones, and look like first-class porters. They are so fond of their own looks that they can't help looking at every store window to catch their reflections.

I haven't gotten any mail yet. I surely must have some over here somewhere, and wish that you would tell me how many letters you have written and where you addressed them. Perhaps I can get hold of them. From now on send all my mail to "Franco-American Flying Corps, c-o Dr. Gros, 23 Ave. du Bois de Boulogne, Paris."

I saw in today's Herald—we got it today, printed a week or so ago—that the first young Americans had just left for the front. It went on to say that these men, mostly from Cornell had left their training camp amid cheers and expected to be in the thick of the fight in a few days. These men are driving trucks and will probably never get within five miles of the front.

We met a young Canadian Lieutenant the other night. He has been in France 14 months. He said that when he enlisted two years ago he was afraid that the war would be over before he could get over here. He told us a little about the Vimy Ridge fight and the recent British advance. He said that he had to go back to the front the next day. He

didn't know how he was going to pay his hotel bill but said he guessed something would turn up; nothing to worry about.

I see that General Pershing has landed in France. The rumor here has it that when the United States gets an army over here we will be transferred to the U.S. Army. I hope that this doesn't happen until I have completed my training, as the French, I imagine, give a much better and a much safer training. I don't think that there is much danger, tho, of the United States getting an army over here for six months or so.

I hope that you are all well. Our mail has probably been sent down to Avord, where we train, so I will not be able to get a letter until I get down there.

With love, CARL.

P. S.—I will just add that we went out to Versailles the other day and looked over the quarters of Louis XIV. We could not get inside the Palace, but had a chance to look over the grounds, and all agreed that Louis had a pretty good backyard. Neither did we blame him for “going wrong” as we all confessed that we could almost fall in love with a statue in those surroundings. We saw Napoleon's royal carriages and they are hand-carved with gold leaf decorations. They looked quite “royal” but for all practical purposes, I should prefer a flivver.



June 14th, 1917.

DEAR SIS:

We got our papers back and to our surprise found that we could leave here on Saturday, rather than waiting a week to ten days as we thought. I never saw so much red tape as they have in this country. You can never do two things on the same day; even if it is signing papers you have to let twenty-four hours go between each paper. A fellow we were eating with left the other day with a car full of bandages and medicine for a hospital at the front. His car broke down and he had to come back and change his cargo to another car. When he went to get his red book for this car the “round headed Frenchman” as he called him, refused to let him go until the old car had been fixed. He waited around here for three days, then dumped his bandages back in the warehouse and went out on the train.

We saw General Pershing and his staff arrive last night; it was quite impressive. As he came up the street in his automobile, everyone took off his hat or waved his handkerchief. The impressive part was that no one shouted or made a remark of any kind. When he reached his hotel a big crowd had assembled and again everyone wildly waved his hat and handkerchief, but no noise. Gen. Joffre came a little after Pershing and then the people let go a little—he only stayed a moment as he saw the people were so discourteous as to give him more of a reception than they did Pershing.

These people over here, after having a million killed, and I don't know how many permanently injured, realize that war is no matter of cheers and flag waving. The vaudeville shows and cabarets are giving America a good share of the acts. Even when the band gets going full tilt and a dozen girls come out on the stage waving flags the audience just sits and takes it in without any flutter of excitement or applause. I think the people are skeptical about what the U.S. Army can do before the war ends. They know that it took England two years to learn the game and figure that it will take the U.S. that long anyway, and they all pray to heaven that it will be over before that time.

Besides taking in the vaudeville and burlesque shows we have been doing the opera. We have seen *Faust*, *Thais*, *Carmen* and *Il Trovatore*. Everything from opera to movies is going full blast. Everything is going, as far as I know, just as in normal times with the exception that all the stores, cafes, etc., have to close up at 9:30 and the shows at 11:00. There seems to be no lack of money to spend and if it were not for the great number of officers and women in black, you would hardly know France was at war. The cafes are crowded and all the shows packed. Of course this can be accounted for by the great number of soldiers that come here to Paris,—these are mostly Englishmen and Canadians, in fact there seems to be more English-speaking people on the streets than French. When I was in a burlesque show the other night I heard a Canadian officer say that he had not had a leave since the middle of 1915 and that he was off on a four-day leave. I heard him say that they were great days; of course this is an exceptional case as most men come in much oftener. I have heard, you can never tell much about what you hear, we may get off much sooner, that we get 21 days in America after we have been at the front for a year.

I forgot to send this letter out when in Paris so will hold it up until I can tell you something of Avord and the Camp (Avord is in the Commonwealth of Chere—about 100 kilometers out of Paris.)

When I got here I found three letters—one from Mother. They had all been forwarded from Ambulance Headquarters, so I guess I got all that was coming to me. (Mother's was written May 20th.) Tell Mother that all cables henceforth, let's hope there won't be many, will be sent to Chapman, but no address. Mother said that you sent me some money and my fountain pen. I didn't get them so you better try to locate them—perhaps you are still carrying them around in your pocket or perhaps they are still on the way.

We left Paris yesterday morning at 8, and reached here at 4. That is eight hours to go about 100 miles—the trains are in keeping with the speedy French ways. However, we had third class tickets and rode in a first class compartment without bothering about the formality of paying, so do not feel so keenly against the R. R. as we might have otherwise.

We got up here at camp at 5 P. M. and were handed out a bed, mattress, two blankets, pillow and canvas bag. The bed consists of boards, laid across two horses; the mattress is a canvas bag filled with straw; the pillow is the same; the canvas bag is used for sheets. I had quite a comfortable sleep, my neck was stiff and my ear sore when I got up but I really did quite well for the first night. I expect to find that there are others in this bed besides myself, but as I have a blanket of my own I am hoping to keep them out for a day or so. We live in barracks with 24 in a room. The barracks are on concrete bases and have a high roof so that they are healthy and comfortable. This morning we got our leather uniforms, working suits, caps, helmets, goggles, puttees and shoes. When you see the men going out to fly, each one carries a leather helmet that looks like a headgear, you might think they were going out to play a game of football.

The camp is a tremendous place. In one small section of the field I counted 34 hangars. There are about 600 men here with about 90 Americans—of course I live with them. I don't know how many machines they have, but there must be a very large number. I have heard "aeroplane talk" ever since I have been here but have not picked up much positive knowledge. I will tell you more dope on that later.

We start in working this afternoon—I mean by working taking lessons in driving. We first drive what is called a Penguin or grass cutter. It has its wings clipped and an old engine so that all it can do is to run along the ground. We have to, or at least we are supposed to, make this thing run along the ground in a straight line. They say that it is very hard to keep it straight and that most men leave this divi-

sion without being able to do it very well. After this we practice leaving the ground a few metres and landing again. After that we gradually fly higher and do more complicated things which I can't as yet describe. We watched an advance class ascend and descend last night. They start out, one after another, sometimes there are forty planes up at once, make a big circle and then come down, fly along the ground to the starting point again, get their instructions and go up again. Most of the men, especially the advanced ones, get up at 3:30 A. M. and fly until about 7:30. Then there is nothing to do until about 5:30, when they go out again and fly until 9:30 or 10 o'clock. I wish you would write me and give me all the news. How is Joe getting on?

With love, CARL.

Address: Ecole d'aviation militaire, Avord, Chere, France.

★ ★ ★

ACTE D'ENGAGEMENT POUR LA "LÉGION ETRANGERE"

L'an mil neuf cent ~~vingt~~ ^{vingt} le 20 ^{de} juin 1916, à 6 heures
s'est présenté devant nous français Sous-Intendant Militaire, résident à Paris, département
de la Seine, M. Chapman Charles, âgé de 28 ans, exerçant la profession
d' électicien, résident à Paris 6 rue de la Harpe département de la Seine
lequel nous a déclaré vouloir s'engager dans la Légion Etrangère et, à cet effet, nous a présenté.
1° Un certificat délivré le 10 par M. Paul Doumer Président du Conseil
de Paris constatant que M. Chapman Charles n'est atteint d'aucune infirmité,
qu'il a la taille et les autres qualités requises pour le service de la Légion Etrangère, et que l'effectif
permet de l'y admettre;
2° Son acte de naissance constatant qu'il est né le 2 décembre 1888 à Quelqueville France
3° Un certificat constatant qu'il est de bonnes vie et mœurs;

Nous, Sous-Intendant Militaire, après avoir reconnu la régularité des pièces produites par
M. Chapman Charles lui avons donné lecture des art. 1 et 4 de l'ordonnance du 10 mars 1831, de
l'art. 2 du décret du 14 septembre 1894, relatif à la durée de l'engagement, et de l'art. 17 de l'instruction
sur l'admission dans la Légion Etrangère, lequel ordonne de faire conduire de brigade en brigade, par
la Gendarmerie, les engagés volontaires trouvés hors de la route qui leur est tracée, et de poursuivre
comme insoumis ceux qui ne se rendent pas à leur destination dans les délais prescrits.

En suite de quoi nous avons reçu l'engagement de M. Chapman Charles
lequel a promis de servir avec fidélité et honneur pendant la durée de la guerre à partir
de ce jour.

Le contractant a promis également de suivre le corps, ou toute fraction du corps, partout où il
conviendra au Gouvernement de l'envoyer.

Donné sous seing privé

M. Chapman Décret du 14 Août 1906

Art. 1° — Dans les régiments étrangers, après trois ans révolus de service, dont six mois au moins
passés dans une section de discipline, le contrat d'engagement des militaires non gradés, servant au
titre étranger, pourra être renouvelé d'office par mesure disciplinaire.

Art. 2° — Les engagements successifs contractés pour deux, trois, quatre ou cinq ans par les
militaires militaires pourront être renouvelés, par mesure disciplinaire, au bout de dix-huit mois (dont huit
passés dans une section de discipline) après la signature des dits engagements.

Art. 3° — Les réintégrations par mesure disciplinaire des actes d'engagement et de rengagement
seront prononcées par le Général commandant le 19^e Corps d'Armée (par le Général commandant
supérieur des troupes, pour les bataillons étrangers stationnés en Indo-Chine et à Madagascar), après
avis d'un conseil de discipline fonctionnant conformément au décret sur le service intérieur des corps
de troupe.

Indépendamment des textes sus-visés et des trois articles qui précèdent nous avons également
donné lecture à l'intéressé de l'article 4 (nouveau) qui fait l'objet du décret présidentiel du 24 mai 1912
et qui remplace le même article du décret du 14 août 1906.

Lecture faite à M. Chapman Charles, il a signé avec nous

Charles Chapman

Signature de M. Chapman Charles

Taille d'un mètre 18 centimètres.

Chenue chaussure

Pied

Dents

Muscle

Poids

65 Kgs

Renseignements physiologiques complémentaires:

Morvais particuliers: rien de spécial

Sourcil

Nos:

Visage:

Finet:

incision

basement

légère

Quelque

longue

visage



June 22, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I am still on the lookout for letters from home—only had one so far. If I don't get some on the boat that arrives this week, I will register a real kick. I don't believe that there can be any at Ambulance Headquarters, or at Dr. Gros' as I got three letters forwarded from the former and John and Bill got some from Dr. Gros. The next letters you send, if you have not already, will you put in Joe's? I would like to know what he is doing.

Things have been moving rather slowly. We have been here a week now and have only had one ride on the Penguin (the first machine you use). Our class is quite large—about fifteen in it. We only go out from six to nine at night. It takes about five minutes for one man to make a sortie—that is if nothing happens to the engine. We should all get at least two sorties a night but I have only had one in three days. We arrive at our class to find that some French officers are taking two or three sorties, just to finish up in this work, or some men in another class have "pulled the lieutenant's leg" and have come around to our class because they could not get a ride in their own. The worst delay comes from the poor engines we have on our machines and which have to have a new spark plug or the magneto fixed about every ride. You would think that when the government puts \$500 or so into one shell, it would be worth while to put good engines in their machines. The money they pay to keep us here the extra time would almost pay for an engine. Of course the men are very hard on the planes. Yesterday two of them ran together and smashed a propeller, a wheel, a tail and enough else to put them into repair for three days. I guess that there is nothing to do but wait. Most of the men here, especially the Frenchmen, are only too glad to be here for three or four months.

The food at what they call the "Ordinaire" or the place where you don't have to pay is quite rotten—all they pay is 23 cents a day for what they give us. As yet I haven't been there. In the morning a meal—I don't know whether you would call it breakfast or dinner—is served at eight. For this meal I am never up; the real aviators get up at 3:30 A. M. The next and last meal is at 4:00 P. M. And for this I am never hungry. Bill went over the other day to see what he could get and came back with a piece of bread and a cup of water. He said they

served something in pans, but if you made an early reach you were liable to get a fork in your hand, and if you waited until things were a little quieter, there was nothing left. I have been eating at the “canteen” the “café d’aviateur” and another little rook house that hasn’t put out its sign yet. The “canteen” is a place run by the camp and is no good, although better than the “Ordinaire.” The other two places are farm houses at which you can get steaks, eggs, potatoes, cheese and beer. For about a dollar a day I can get pretty good meals here.

About all I do is sleep, eat and read. When I get tired of sleeping, I go get a meal and can then sleep for another hour or so. When that gets tiresome I read, then eat and then sleep again. I have taken a few walks. This afternoon Bill (Bill Loomis from Amherst) and I walked to Avord. We got caught in a rainstorm so passed an hour or so in the village church. From the outside it looked as tho it had been built about 1 B.C. and had been used successively for a prison and fort. The inside was a respectable Catholic Church. I hope that you are all well. Be sure to write me all the news.

With love, CARL.

Address : Ecole d’Aviation, Avord, Chere, France.



June 23, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I received your letter written on June 6th yesterday, and was certainly glad to hear from you. This is the second letter I have received from you, so I guess you had better start your suit against Postmaster Kelly. I never received any of Sis's letters nor the fountain pen you said she found. If you ever locate them, send them on as news is gladly received over here, even tho it is two months old. Someone has appropriated my fountain pen so send on the pen also.

I guess that they will need all those bandages Marian is tending to before the war is over. Here is hoping that it is over just about a month after I get to the front—this will give me time enough to see how the war is carried on—but I have my doubts about it being over within anything less than a year. Bill and I just came back from a walk down toward Senlis, and on our way home while crossing a creek I fell in and got wet up to my knees. While I was drying out a wounded French soldier came along and stopped to talk with us. He had been wounded in the arm at the Somme four months ago and still looked as tho he was a long way from well. I exchanged pennies with him—they are always glad to get an American penny.

You needn't worry about my warm clothes. In the first place it has been warm—altho nothing like the 101 and 102 degree days we have in Waterloo. And in the second, I have woolen socks, underwear, shirts and heavy shoes and a big coat, so am only in danger of sunstroke!

I had my second ride on the Penguin yesterday. I got along much better and begin to feel that I am a real pilot already—I think my wings have almost sprouted. Six more Americans came in yesterday, and were put in our class—this means that we will be held up all the longer.

You can read your paper over here until almost 10:00. This is because all time has been set forward an hour so as to have more daylight for work and to save electricity. A pretty clever scheme, I claim.

Four fellows left here today for Pau where they take their course in acrobatics which finishes their training. I wish that I was along as far as that, but expect that a three months "vacation" which is what this

is, is not to be spurned. Any soldier would give his last dollar to exchange places with me. They can't understand how anyone can be enthusiastic. War is all right in story books, but living on stew and in trenches for three years is quite different.

Since being here at camp, I have written you and Sis each a letter (this makes the second to you). If you do not get them all, let me know—I may start a suit over here. With love, CARL.

* * *

June 27, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I just received your letter, dated May 29th, the third that I have received. It has taken, as you see by the date, almost a month. Why I don't know, but surmise that it was held up at the Am. Ambulance headquarters. I suppose that I will have one or two letters sent to Dr. Gros, but hope to have them coming direct before long.

I hope that by the time this letter reaches you, that you and Dad will have recovered. You have a good long healthy spell due you. What is the trouble with Dad? Has his lumbago returned? When in Paris I used to get small attacks of it, if getting a knot in your back is lumbago, but down here the bed bugs keep us moving so much that I don't give my back a chance to knot.

I sent a cablegram saying that I had arrived safely from Bordeaux. Did you receive it O. K.?

Tell Dad not to worry about my money. I will make it last. I had so many things to buy before I sailed that it used up all my money. Since getting over here I have had to spend more on uniform, blankets and other miscellaneous things that eat into one's roll. When I go to Paris again I have to buy two blankets, a cot, writing book, shoe brush, aviation books, belt and shaving soap. So much on my list already. However, I have plenty of money.

I wish that I were home to drive the Franklin. I haven't been in anything better than a Paris taxi for months.

Is Joe changing to an Officers Reserve Camp? I can understand his changing if he progressed as slowly as we do. The bed bugs are almost welcomed as they give one enough of a fight to make you forget your troubles. For this reason I am debating carefully whether to buy that cot and those blankets in Paris.

I have just come in from the field where, as usual, I did nothing. In fact none of us did anything as we had a slight shower and wind so the instructor, altho they had walked us all the way out there in the rain, did not show up. This lack of doing something has made me think of changing to the "Caudron" class where you begin flying with an instructor immediately, but all the older men advise me to stay in the "Bleriot" class, even tho they are slow at first. They all say that when we get past this first class we will fly both morning and evening, so will have no complaint. The "Bleriot" training is supposed to be the best training one can get anywhere. The B— is a monoplane and very hard to fly, but once mastered one can fly any other machine. In this school you learn to fly alone—in all others you go up with an instructor. In each successive class you learn the next advanced step until you have completed the course in the "Bleriot" when you go to the "Nieuport," the biplane that is mostly used for fighting at the front.

I saw a nice piece of piloting this afternoon. A man went up just as we were leaving for our field. A big storm was coming up and why he went up at all is more than I know. Before he had been up five minutes a gust of wind hit him and knocked him up in the air about 100 feet. He shut off his engine and turned his nose to the ground and gradually came down, all the time being knocked right and left by the wind. He made a beautiful landing, but I thought that when that wind hit him he was a goner. Of course an expert pilot can fly in a wind, but not many of these novices here venture out on any but a quiet day.

American cigarettes are unknown over here and the good cigars cost fifty cents. Tell Dad if he has any of his Xmas cigars on his hands to send them over.

If rumor is correct we are to have a three days leave of absence over the Fourth. There is to be a celebration of some sort at Versailles in which we take part.

Can you read my letters? Is there anything in particular that you want to know? I think of lots to write when I am not writing, but forget it when writing.

With love, CARL.



Avord, July 3rd, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

When I came in last night I saw the welcome sight of some letters on my bed and upon investigation found there were two from you, two from Jim and two from Joe. More mail than I had received since I came and it was almost too much of a blow (your letters were dated June 9th-13.) Do not understand why you haven't received some of my letters. Wrote one the first hour I was on the boat and sent it off with the pilot. I did not write in Paris until I had been there for some time, but have been sending them fast enough to wear you out answering them since I've been here. What kind of cars did Dad and Uncle O. buy?

I couldn't have been in that New York Herald picture. The only picture I have been in is one that a bunch of American periodical writers took of our class. They said they were going to use it in a series of articles, so you may see me looking you in the face some time. There is a coon in our class so keep your eyes open for a picture of a bunch of dirty aviators with a "black spot" on the left hand side and I am right near him.

You see all sizes and kinds of gardens over here, and I must confess that I blush a little when I think of the one I tried to rear. Every house has a flower garden with a few vegetables on the side. I don't believe they have weeds here, at least they don't have a Nauman vacant lot crop next door to fight against.

Joe hasn't got so very much on me with his motorcycle. I bought a second hand bicycle yesterday. Right now my seater feels a little the worse for the bargain, but I expect to have a good time on it riding to some of the towns around here. I might as well see what is here while I haven't much to do.

I have started a mustache and expect to look real Frenchy ere long. Have been changed to the morning class and expect to move along much faster. We work from 4 A. M. to 8:30. We had the sad orders today that none of us would be allowed to go to Paris on the Fourth. Some of the fellows have been "boozing" too much and the good are punished with the guilty.

With love, CARL.



Avord, July 7th, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I just received your two letters dated June 2nd and June 17th. Received a letter dated June 13th four days ago so you see how the mail is held up more at one time than another. This makes about the ninth letter I've written. Perhaps some of them have been censored, but I doubt it, as I do not reveal anything which, as far as I know, would cause censorship. You may receive them all in one batch.

As I told you in the last letter, I've been shifted to the morning class and have been doing a little more work. I had two sorties this morning which makes my seventh. I have thirteen more coming before I can be moved to the next class, so I have a considerable wait before me. Since I've gotten my bicycle I've been going to Forges for breakfast. It is the only place I know of where you can get coffee or milk, or chocolate. I go to this old hotel every morning. (The paper looks as tho it were put on during the Revolution or perhaps earlier) and get three eggs "au plat" (I think they are baked), chocolate in a bowl, some toast and jam. This is also the only place that I know of where they even know the name of "toast." They call it grilled bread. There is a hotel (these hotels are usually run by old women and have about two patrons a day, with the exceptions of the Americans—so should not be thought of with lobbies, bell-boys, etc.) in Soringuy, a town about six miles from here, that I've heard has *honey*. I'm going to run down there soon and try it out. There is a hotel some ten miles away that has *pies*. I'm going there some day when we have "repos" or a day for ourselves. In the evening I always go to the "Cafe des Aviateurs" a farm house about ten minutes walk away and get eggs (again au plat), bread, jam, coffee (no cream), cheese and meat, usually veal. I pay about two francs for the meal (about fifty cents) and for my breakfast about the same. These two meals are all I eat as from the time I get back here from class and breakfast is about ten and I usually read, write and do errands until about six-thirty.

Have had my uniform altered to fit me and certainly look like a real aviator now. If I can get permission I am going to Bourges tomorrow to buy the things I was going to get in Paris on the Fourth, when we thought we were going to get off. We had some good cookies

today which Mrs. Sharp, the wife of the American ambassador, sent down to us. The only trouble was that there was not enough. Tell Marian to send me a box of eats and I'll be her friend forever. I don't know how she could send it, but she could inquire at the express office.

Love to all, CARL.



Avord, France, July 8th, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I went to Bourges today and just got back. It certainly seemed good to get into a uniform, shine my boots and brush up like a gentleman. When I got down to the station I found that I could not get a ticket without a "permission." This was a new "tightening up" as the fellows have been going over without thinking about a "permission." I had run about a mile to get to the station on time and I was not going all the way back for that permission.

When the train came along three other fellows and myself piled into a third-class car and rode to Bourges. Then instead of going out the gate, where they collect the tickets, we walked around the station right by a guard and into the street. On the way back I got a ticket OK but got into the wrong door which led to the train. A soldier stopped me but I looked blank and sputtered "je ne comprend pas" (I don't understand) so they let me pass without even taking my ticket at Avord. "Je ne comprend pas" is always used when you get into trouble. If you get caught riding first class on a third class ticket you just sputter this out and shrug your shoulders; it usually works like a charm. I guess they figure that we don't know any better and are so glad to have us here and so afraid that they may scare us back home that they let us "get away" with most anything. Bourges is 12 miles north and it only costs seven cents to ride. Think I shall go often. Think I shall cycle up the next time, however. The town is large and should have lots of interesting things to see.

Love, CARL.



Avord, France, July 9th, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

It has been about five days now since I have had a sortie, and I begin to feel that I am going to die as an old soldier at Avord. For about three mornings my turn came just after it was time to stop, and yesterday and today have been rainy and windy, consequently no flying. The monitor has borrowed my wheel a couple of times so I should have a stand-in with him, but guess I shall have to treat him to a "feed" before I can move very fast. The fellow who bunks on my right side has just about finished. He came in yesterday from his second "petite voyage" or a cross country trip of about 150 miles. About twenty miles south of here, he had engine trouble so had to make a forced landing. He landed in a field in which a girl was tending sheep, and nearly scared her to death; she was so frightened she ran home. She thought he was a German. His name is Wilson and the villagers wanted to know if he was the son of President Wilson, and he told them he was only a cousin. He said every time he walked down the street the people came out to look at him and salute him. The Americans here in camp are losing their good name. Three men went to Paris last week after the captain had told them not to. They are now spending eight days in solitary confinement. Last night a new man who was drunk enough to feel mean knocked a French "poilu" down while in a cafe. Three days ago three fellows got into trouble with a captain while in Bourges and in the mix-up they knocked a policeman down and ran away before they could get their names. About half the Americans here at Avord are little better than bums. Most of them have spent their lives moving around from one place to another and I suppose they sort of slid into this on a chance to have an exciting year. They may get more than they bargained for.

The fourteenth of July is a big French holiday and we are hoping to get forty-eight hours off. If we do I think that I shall stay here and get in some work, or try at least. If the monitor is here I should be able to finish up with my penguin work and get a good start on the "rouler" class. I have started taking French talking lessons from a soldier, at the rate of thirty cents per hour. Hope I shall be able to jabber ere long.

Joe is certainly going to learn to fly if plugging will do it. I hope Miss Stintson doesn't try any of her county fair stunts while he is with her.

Dearest love, Carl.

* * *

Avord, France, July 18th, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I'm writing this from "Bengz" a small town about four miles from Avord and to which I have ridden on my wheel. I stopped over to visit a bit before I go to La Guenche where the fellows say you can get a good meal with apple pie as dessert. So unless I have a puncture between here and there I shall be eating a repast fit for a king at six to-night.

Your son is a real jail bird now, having gotten a fifteen day sentence for being absent when he should have been present. The lieutenant of the camp sprang a surprise roll call on the Americans when I was in Bourges sightseeing. That was the first time anything like that had happened so he caught about fifteen absent from the barracks. We all got "consigne," which means that you only have to report at the police station at nine P. M. every night. All except another fellow and myself were excused, but I couldn't get out because they knew I'd been in Bourges which was not excusable. However, I had to report only twice, as all our real sentences were revoked on the 14th in honor of the French Independence Day.

About fifteen of us "penguin" stars are going to move up to the next class tomorrow or Thursday. It is certainly time that we moved somewhere, either to the next class or out of school. I expect though that from now on we will move much faster and may be thru in two months more. The next class is called "Rouler." In it you use a Bleriot machine, one that has full sized wings and a six cylinder engine. We are supposed to roll this machine over the ground, but not let it rise (when it does it usually comes down with a smash). We will probably be here two or three weeks before moving again. A bunch of the fellows got a forty-eight hour leave last night to go to Paris. My police sentence kept me from going, but I can go now any time. I think I shall go up within a week or two. It will seem good to be in civiliza-

tion again. I shall have to stop if I'm going to get to La Guenche and that apple pie.

Love to all, CARL.

P. S.—If you can't read this swear at the traveler's facilities of the Hotel de la Gan, Bengz, France.

* * *

Avord, France, July 19th, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I'm glad that you finally got my first letter. Aunt May wrote me a letter in answer to a postal I wrote her which was the first answer I had received to any of my letters. It sounds like the good old days when all the boys come up to swim. I think that a river would scare me to death now as I've lived without water for so long. Of course we have enough to *drink*, but as for taking a bath or going for a swim it is practically impossible. We do take baths, but it is a tedious task as we have to catch drops in our hands then spread it over us as far as it will go. As you can see, this is too great a task for us to go thru often, about twice a week to be exact (some overstep this and go as long as a week or ten days). The weather is mild and we wear woolen underwear, so this is not a very serious condition. We don't have to pay any tuition. In fact we get a salary of thirty-six francs, (provided you don't have a jail sentence) from the French Government.

I hope that I don't have to drive a bombing machine. Unless I get "radiated" (sent from the Bleriot school to the Caudron for poor work), I shall finish on a Nieuport or scouting machine. I don't think I shall have any trouble in getting thru the Bleriot school, but one can never tell. If you break two machines you are theoretically radiated. There have been two or three radiations in the last couple of days but from the specimens I have seen get thru Bleriot I should say that it could not be very hard. Of course if you go thru the bakery shop and then walk out and salute the Captain and say "Bonjour" as one of the Americans did yesterday, you are likely to be radiated, simply because you didn't get shot when you should have been. A fellow and I (Ash by name) went down to the movies at the Artillery Camp last night and saw "Heine and Louise" and a couple of other American films

one of which was a wild western and just fitted in with the Frenchman's idea of America and Americans.

Thirteen of us are going up to the next class tomorrow. I nearly got left off but made a noise just in time so was put on as the thirteenth. I'm going down to the Artillery Camp tonight to a new eating establishment. I don't suppose that we will get anything but regular "mess" but might be able to get a new variety of eggs, hot chocolate, bread and cheese. From now on we will be busier as we work both morning and night (5:00 to 8:00 A. M. and 4:30 to 8:30 P. M.)

Love to all, CARL.

* * *

July 24, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I have received your two letters dated July 1st and 5th. I think that I have received all you have written except those two you put two-cent stamps on—did you ever see Mr. Kelly? It takes about the same time to receive your letters as it does for you to receive mine. None of yours have been ever censored—do they censor mine? I began with my last letter to number each letter, so that you can tell if there are any gaps due to "subs" or censors.

Yes, my \$47 (not \$55) began when I came here, but alas, it is to be at least 40 of it, discontinued. The forty Dr. Gros sent us, taken from a fund, has too big a drain on it now that the camp has 100 Americans in it. This will hit some of the fellows hard as you need the entire 47 to feed yourself. When we get to the front we only get 36 francs so you can see they don't value, in money, your services very much.

Your reference to swimming and hot weather reminds me that it is July and old Iowa is probably sizzling at 98 degrees in the shade. Here it is very cool. In the morning and evening you have to wear a sweater under your rubber coat and at noon it is never too hot to enjoy a mid-day nap. It is so cool I haven't even cared much for a swim.

I don't know how good Joe will be after he has spent his \$300 but should say he was an "ace" if he can become a pilot in 300 minutes. Before we go to the front we have from 80 to 100 hours flying so you can see how long it takes to make a pilot according to the French standards. So far I have had 150 minutes—no "flying" but at least the preliminary work. Since I wrote last I have left the dear old penguin

class and have gone thru “rouler” (rolling with a regulation plane) to “decole” (rising from the ground to a height of about 10 feet and then “settling” by cutting down the engine.) I have really jumped the “decole” class and am in the “pique” (rising about 30 feet then pointing the machine down and sailing, or smashing down) but as the three of us that went up have never left the ground we will have to have some “decole” work. However, it is an advantage to be in the class as we can do “pique” work without having to change classes which often holds you up. Although I have been in the class two days I have not had a sortie as there has always been a breeze and a breeze is enough to stop any work in this class. There were five smash-ups on the Bleriot field yesterday morning and altho no one was hurt, in spite of the fact that some of them sailed down from a hundred feet, the machines had to be put on the hospital list. At that rate it won’t take long to put the school out of business. It certainly is a pleasure to be out of the penguin class where there are 25 men to one machine to the decole class, where we have two machines for every eight men—the machines are *real* ones that will actually fly.

We are now at the Bleriot field and stay here until we are ready for a final school training on the “Nieuport.” From pique, we go to tour de piste (making small 10 minute tours of the country), then do an à gauche and an à droite (a sharp turn to the left then right while you are descending with motor cut), and finally a spiral (a complete turn under same conditions as the à gauche). After this we go to Nieuport, (a type of machine used at front), where we do our altitude and triangles or two cross-country runs of about 150 miles apiece. After that, we go to Pau for final training in acrobatics, which speaks for itself. After Pau we go to Plessis-Belleville, where we get our own machines and wait for our orders to go to the front. It sounds like a long process, but I think that I will be finished here within six weeks. Pau is only a matter of ten to fourteen days.

We had “repos” (vacation) the morning of two days ago and I went up to Bourges for the morning. I spent most of the time looking for cigarettes and candy for the fellows. The only French cigarette most of us can smoke has been cleaned out around here, so we have to send a delegate to Bourges to get our supplies. A good many of the fellows get cigarettes from home so I wish that you would tell Dad to slip some Fatimas or Murads in with those cigars. He better put “Pilote Élève” after my name. He might even address it in care of the French Minister of War as some of the packages received safely have

been. Altho a good many packages sent to the fellows over here have been lost, I don't think that there should be any trouble now that we are at war.

With love, CARL.

* * *

July 29, 1917.

DEAR DAD:

I received your letter and was very glad to hear from you. Since I wrote last I have had an accident; smashed a machine, turned over but did not even scratch myself. You know that I told you in my last letter that I had been moved up from "rouler" with only ten sorties and had jumped one class (I thought I was doing something only a few of the real good men did and was quite proud of myself) I found that when I got my first sortie in the rouler class, where you leave the ground ten to thirty feet, that I had moved a little too fast. The other men in the class were all good and were going up thirty and forty feet so I thought that was the thing to do. I got in the machine and put the gas open and started down the field like a bullet from a cannon. Pretty soon I felt myself jumping up in the air a little and then settling to the ground again, so I thought I had better pull my elevator back some more so as to keep it up. I sure went up—about 60 feet. I saw the ground sink under me, and believe me, that sixty feet was the highest I have ever been or hope to be. I thought I was up in the clouds. I knew I was going in the wrong direction so I put my elevator stick forward to bring her down but I got it too far forward and started for the ground. I knew that if I ever hit the ground at the rate I was going that they would have to mine for me so I pulled the stick back again and started up again. I repeated this roller-coaster act about four times and at the same time I was sliding first to the right and then to the left—the fellows said I did everything that comes under acrobatics. In the meantime I had come about to the end of our field and I knew that something pretty important had to be done. I couldn't keep bobbing up and down all over the grounds. The only thing left to do was to stop the engine, which I did, when I was on the up slide; of course I lost speed and went off into a "wing slide," and hit the ground on the nose of the machine and then had the pleasure of dangling by the seat strap while the machine slowly rolled over on its back.

I guess these machines are made for such accidents because no one ever seems to get hurt in them, and there are usually four or five broken planes scattered around the field. The monitor did not curse me out as I expected but just asked me if I was hurt. He told me my mistake. I got in another machine and tried it again but had a tendency to roll so the monitor said I better lay off for four days and see how it was done. He may send me back to rouser for more work there so the next time I write I may be demoted. It certainly is great sport tho to feel yourself rise from the ground, but not so good to return as I did.

My French is slowly improving. I am taking lessons each day so that now I can almost understand what the monitor tells me. We have interpreters but I will be glad when I can be sure that the interpreter gives me the "straight dope."

The latest rumor is that we are all to be taken over into the American Army—whether we want to or not. This may not be so; I hope not. I would prefer to finish here (we might be allowed to stay here even if we are taken over) and go to the French front for about two months. I would have the advantage there of being with an experienced Escadrille. After that I would like to change and fight for my own country.

It is too bad Joe did not get into the Officers' Camp. I hope he has luck on the next draw. I wish that he were here. He could get along as fast as he wished.

I see that Thaw, the only man of the original Escadrille, and Lufbury, an ace, both of the Lafayette Escadrille, are going back to the states to teach aviation. The fellows say that they will get Major's ranks. They deserve the rank all right as they know the game from A to Z.

We don't go into the Lafayette Escadrille as I thought at first but have to go into some French unit which is not full. We can ask to go to any unit we want and have a good chance of having it accepted, providing it is not one composed of "aces" exclusively; but as yet I have no preference. Two men who just left here a week ago have gone, one to Serbia and the other to Morocco. I prefer France.

The last three days have been hot but not what you would call good corn weather; when the fellows yell about the heat I tell them what we have in I-O-W-A.

Wish I had the new car here for about a week. Lots to see and good roads.

With love to all, CARL.



August 2, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I have been put back in the rouler class just as I said I might be. I had a couple of more sorties in the decole class and then broke a wheel so the monitor said that I had better go back to rouler for twenty or thirty more sorties. The monitor wasn't at all angry, altho I did break two machines for him. After I get a few more sorties in my present class I will be ready to go up again. A fellow that did the same thing as I did, i.e., go from decole back to rouler, was sent from decole on his return after he had had only five sorties. If they try to push me out like that I will make a kick as that was just the mistake they made in sending me through rouler so fast. Even tho your first five or ten sorties in a class are very good you should have twenty or thirty to get a good hold on the way it is done.

We had repose yesterday so I went to Bourges to make some purchases. I bought a steel cot, another blanket, a blue cotton shirt and a pair of khaki trousers for use around here. Two other fellows and I got a great feed of hors d'oeuvre, (I don't know just what it was), omelette, jam, coffee, beefsteak and French fried potatoes, cheese and salad. It wasn't served in this order but that is how I remember it.

Jim sent me Joe's letters and I am glad to hear that he is going to be moved to Champaign. That sounds like a more interesting place than San Antonio.

Hope you didn't climb any telephone poles learning to run the car.

I have already subscribed for the New York Herald. I never saw a paper that could escape the news it can but still it gives us a little of the doings. Some of the fellows get United States periodicals so we can follow events fairly well.

There don't seem to be much to write about.

With love to all, CARL.

P. S.—Colder than Alaska today. If you have any fur skins you don't want send them over and I will have a vest or coat made from them. I can see this winter flying is going to be cold.

* * *

August 8, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I am writing this from the truck that carries us out to our field while waiting for the wind to die down. We have had poor weather for the last three or four days so consequently have had no sorties.



I have been advanced to the decole class again and have gone fairly well so far. If we had had a good day today four of us would have been sent up to the next class tonight. I am not any too anxious to go up until I have had ten or more sorties but will probably get almost that number anyway and perhaps more. I had thirty-one rides in the rouler class so have no kick coming there.

We hear wilder and more varied rumors as to what the United States Army is going to do in regard to us each day. A man who claims that he has the straight dope from headquarters, says that we will be examined within two weeks and if passed will be taken into the United States Army. He doesn't know how hard or of what nature the examination will be, nor whether we have to take the examination. He seems to think that this camp is going to be taken over and made exclusively an American Camp. I doubt this; don't know where the Frenchmen here would train or what the United States would do with the Aviation Camp they have built, (according to some more straight dope) a little south of here. I hope that we are not compelled to go into the United States Army as I want to finish here and go to the French front for a couple of months. I think that I would get more experience and get ahead faster that way.

We have a new Captain who called us together yesterday for his inaugural address. From what I could gather of what he said we are going to have stricter rules, that is, they are to be enforced more stringently, but we are also to have more permissions to Bourges and Paris. He also hinted that the quality of the grub might be bettered (I am with him there).

I had my first sleep in my new cot last night and I tell you it was anything but what I had looked forward to. In some way I don't know how, I got a new generation of bed bugs. I spent most of the night fighting these.

I have just finished conversing with one of the French mechanics. It was not real conversation but violent attempts on my part to express myself with the few words and grammatical expressions I know. When he would jabber something to me I would say, "oui" just as tho I got him perfectly. He made some washers for me for my bicycle. I met him in the rouler class where he was a mechanic and used to talk a little with him there. He says that he is going to the United States after the war where he can get a good wage. He is a good fellow and a clever mechanic so if you want a man for your car let me know.

He was telling me of some of his friends who have been at the front and of the condition of some of the wounded. I couldn't understand him very well so he described their condition by making gestures; to illustrate lost feet, legs, hands, arms, in fact about everything except heads.

It is 8 P. M. and still raining so some of us are going to leave and get an omelette and coffee at our regular cafe, (a farm house).

A "Schmidt" airplane has just landed after a trip down from Paris. They left Paris at five, stopped forty minutes on the way and it is now 7:30 so you can see they did not linger long on the way.

Catherine Condict sent me a pair of knit socks which I am at present wearing. They feel pretty good; fit as tho she knew my size exactly.

The Y. M. C. A. is going, (at least there is good prospect of it), to put in a sandwich and cigarette stand. The man brought us some United States cigarettes a few days ago and he was bought out before ten minutes.

Lots of love, CARL.

* * *

August 11, 1917.

DEAR SIS:

I am trying to write this letter from the truck while we are waiting for the wind to go down and with the gang all shouting and pushing, so if it is not very coherent and has more mis-spelled words than usual, blame them on to the environment.

This is the fifth day that we have had no sorties—too much wind and rain either of which puts all work on the shelf. I wouldn't mind a little wind about one day a week if we could leave the camp but we have to go out to the field just as tho we were going to fly. Dave Lewis and I take turns answering for each other at roll-call, but we can only get away with it at the general roll-call and not at the class call.

We had a half day of repose yesterday. Two other fellows and myself went to La Guershe, a town about 15 miles down the road. We caught the train, rode first class, with no ticket as usual, and spent the night in a real bed. We put up at the Hotel De le Poste, one of the country hostelries that you find all thru this country. Out in front a couple of tables at which you can gossip and drink beer, inside the tile floors, the wall paper that has been hanging for a couple of genera-

tions and the wooden old tables and chairs. You must have seen lots of these when you were here. I had a bed that I had to get into by running across the room and making a jump for it. The bed was so soft and comfortable that I could not sleep. The next noon (I slept till 11 o'clock), we had a regal repast, Hors d'oeuvre, cold veal, some other kind of cold meat that looked like clam meat, beefsteak and mashed potatoes, chocolate and fruit. The price of the room and meal was nine francs. In contrast to this meal I had "Chevalier" or bone patti and bread for this morning's breakfast. I was eating at the Cafe des Aviateurs, (eggs, cheese, coffee) when a vender came along with a basket of melons. I bought one, (he stuck me fifty cents) and it sure did taste good.

We have a new Captain and among other changes, he is going to put all Bleriot men thru the Caudron School and vice versa. The Caudron is a bombing and observing plane and the experience will be worth while. From Caudron we go to the Nieuport as before. We also hear that we are to be a month at Pau instead of ten days as formerly. I guess that the new men have not been showing up as well as the heads want them to.

Give all the gang my regards. Wish I were there for a swim. Give my best to Katherine Reed. Hope she finds the town cooler than it usually is in August.

With lots of love, CARL.

* * *

August 16, 1917.

DEAR DAD:

I hope that by the time this letter reaches you, you will be up and doing and ready to leave for Colorado to help carry out the nuggets.

Our spell of bad weather (almost 20 days) has broken and we have started work again with lots of pep. I got six sorties this morning and if the good weather keeps up will get six to ten more tonight. Our regular monitor is off on a ten days permission so I may have to stay in "decoleur" for a few days longer than I would have had he been here. However, that doesn't bother me as long as I get some flying. I would just as soon be in this class as in the next, as I can do the same thing here as I will have to do in that. My confidence has returned, (I

confess it had flown after my two smashes and I was pretty nervous and uncertain for awhile) and I can run the machine in good style. I did have a couple of rocky sorties this morning but corrected myself before landing so that I came down as nicely as a bird. One of the fellows in the class had a bad smash, he did about the same kind of a stunt that I did but did not come out quite so well as he cut his head a little.

Our Corporal came back from Paris last night with the tale that we were all to be examined for the American army within the next ten days. This morning my French tutor who is besides my tutor, an interpreter, told me that the captain told him that we would probably not be taken over at all. That is the way we hear things, first we are then we are not. I sent in my petition today to stay with the French Army.

I had my breakfast at a new establishment this morning. When we go out to the field at 4:30 A. M. we get a slice of sausage and a piece of bread to last us for the morning. This may be enough for a Frenchman but most of our gang has to stop off on the way home and get a few eggs. We have been stopping at a Tavern, run by the woman of the house, as they all are. The man usually sits around and tends to the wine cellar. All she could give us was eggs as she had never served anything to eat before we came so could not get milk or meat which is only sold to old customers. The new establishment we found served potatoes, eggs and hot chocolate under a red canvass out in the barnyard. With the exception of the yard it seemed like eating at a church sociable. If you eat at any of these places at night, as they are not allowed to serve after nine o'clock, they have to close up all the windows and doors and when you are ready to leave, to take you down thru the garden and sneak you out thru the door in the garden wall.

We have a Y. M. C. A. canteen here now and can buy canned pears, peaches, apricots as well as French tobacco, Spearmint gum and Peters' chocolate. I am gradually getting the better of my bed bugs. I sleep with a piece of camphor in my sleeping bag which at least keeps them on the outside. The rumor is that we are all due for a big fumigation. There sure will be a big slaughter in bed bugs.

I had a letter from George Bennigan, the assistant business manager of the Olio who took my job, and he said that he pulled thru O. K. That was music to my ears as it looked pretty bad when I left.

I wish that we had a little of your weather. Even morning I have to wear a sweater; a coat and an overcoat out to work. Two blankets at night is nearly always necessary.

Mother asks about our pay. We get thirty-six francs from the French Government and 200 from the Franco-American Flying Corps. When we go to the front we lose the 200 so get \$7.20 per month while at the front. The rumor is that we are not going to get any more money from the F. A. F. C. but don't know for sure. Tell Mother not to hesitate to send a package. Peanut butter would taste good. A good many fellows have gotten packages O. K. I don't think there is any need of Mother bothering to knit a sweater or socks as I have a sweater and warm socks. I will have to get a sheep skin vest and some kind of special gloves. They say the fellows have a hard time to keep from freezing their faces and hands but I guess that I can rig up something O. K. We get a leather suit that is pretty warm and some big fur boots that pull over our other shoes. With these, a couple of pairs of underwear and socks and shirts and a sweater and vest and fur helmet, I guess I can work it O. K.

I answered George Williams' letter. Sorry he did not get it. I must have disclosed some "inside stuff," and had it censored.

I am glad Joe has moved and is going to have a chance to fly at last. That is the one thing we do here. We could learn a great deal thru lectures but "narry a one." The best we can do is to read the few aviation books we can get hold of.

I am getting along well in French. I was mistaken for a Frenchman (my mustache) the other day and was not found out until I spoke.

With love to all, CARL.

* * *

August 22, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

How do you like my new paper? I bought this from a girl who has had both her father and mother killed in the war, and has taken to doing such things to earn a living. She lived in Belgium and until the war was heir to quite a bit of property, but now she will inherit only a pile of stones. I can't write to you very often on this (each sheet has a

different picture on it so I would like to send you one of each) as it would break me up.

I am now in the advanced pique class and as soon as we have one morning or night of good weather I will be able to finish and go to "tour de piste" or the class in which you make short five to ten minute flights. After that comes short rides on a better machine and finally you have to do a "serpentine" and "spiral." These last are done by cutting off the motor when you are up six or seven hundred metres and then either cut an "S" or a spiral as you come down. After that we are sent to the Caudron Machine where we do our altitude and cross-country flights. When we have done that we receive our brevet which means that you are a licensed French Pilot and can wear a two-winged badge in place of the one-winged one we wear now.

However we have all received a scare. For some reason all the Americans are being sent from this camp to others, some to be sure much more pleasant than this. The rumor is that we are all to be sent to some other school or schools before five days. I won't care if I can get thru Bleriot first but unless we have better weather I won't be able to do it. At these other schools we will get Caudron training which is good but can't be compared with the Bleriot. Wherever we go we will all come back here for our perfection work on the Nieuport before we go to Pau.

I received letters from you written August 2nd, and August 3rd, and a postal from Joe yesterday. I am glad that it is cooling off. Today is one of the few hot days we have had. It makes me think of swimming and consider getting to some seashore village for my seven day permission (we may not get it if we move). Rousseau, my French teacher, suggests Biarritz, but as that is near Pau I figure I can take that in later. Most of the fellows have had at least one 48 hour permission but I thought I would wait until I get well along before asking for one but don't want to ask now as I want to finish if possible before we are sent away.

We have seen quite a few American troops going through here and they certainly look good. We held a truck train up a few days ago and made them sell us some good old Prince Albert tobacco.

The commander of the school was killed this morning in a head-on accident. The Frenchmen have much harder luck than we as we seem to pull out of every imaginable accident with only scratches.

With love to all, CARL.



August 25, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

This week's mail came just now and I came off with mail from you and Katherine Chapman and a postal from Aunt May. I am glad that you had such a good time on your trip and found that the car stood the trip O. K.

Another bad spell of weather has set in. I have been four days without getting into a machine and as you can always expect a week's bad weather when the wind gets in the west, I expect it will be some weeks more before I do. Why they ever established a school here is more than I can figure. The new American Aviation Camp is not far from here, they say we are all to be sent there before long, so I expect that the poor American "Élèves" will spend a good deal of time cursing the weather. Of course bad weather is a blessing for the French "Élèves" as they want to kill just as much time here as they can. One man told me he would like to see it rain for a week every day.

Joe says that a couple of companies are to be sent to France for training. I suppose that they will come to this place (can't give the name) near here. Quentin Roosevelt, a first lieutenant, was over here the other day and he says that the camp is to accommodate 1500 men or about 500 pilots. But he said that very little had been done as yet so I guess they won't be turning out pilots very soon. He said he had about fifty German prisoners to help with the work but if the camp had to be built by them there would be no men turned out there until long after the war.

A fellow by the name of Foster and myself walked from the pique field to Farges this morning for breakfast. We had an omelette (nearly all my meals are of eggs), (2) more eggs, (3) still more eggs, chocolate, potato bread. (I have sharpened my teeth so long on this bread that I can enjoy it, provided it is soaked in chocolate or coffee) and fried potatoes. We were so full when we left that we staggered up the road and had to rest every now and then for breath. I expect that when I get home you will be rather surprised at my table manners. First I expect, if I let my mind wander any, that I will take out my jack knife and stick it in the table. Then I will perhaps seize the loaf of bread (if you serve bread already cut you can save me this embarrassment) and slice off a large piece after which I will perhaps cut another piece off

and swab my plate to wipe off the excess grease and dirt. I am quite sure to do these things and likely to do some others such, for instance, as shouting for the cook to bring on the mess or for my neighbor to shove along the beans. I will probably be caught tossing cigarette stubs behind the piano and have a tendency to take two o'clock naps and shout "pipe down," to any one making a noise. I will also probably want a few bugs in my bed as I don't think I will bother about becoming re-acclimated to a clean bed.

Foster and I met an old trooper at the Cafe this morning and got him talking about the war—give any of them a glass of beer and they will talk and talk until you fall asleep. Their pet subject is "Embusques" and they can never talk too long or too animated on it. He said he knew five men that had received medals since the war that had never been to the front; gotten them and their soft jobs, thru pull. Naturally a man that has been in the trenches for three years despises these men. He says that after the war when these soldiers come back from the trenches these men will have a sorry time. I think they are having a sorry time now because they are shown how much they are disliked every time a "poilu" meets one.

The new service stripes have just come out and I am keeping a lookout for a man with five. You get a service stripe for active service at the front; one for the first year and one for every six months after. I haven't seen any five stripes yet; they are mighty scarce,—three and four stripes are scarce enough.

I hope Joe is at Belleville and flying. He certainly has waited long enough. If I complain at a five or seven day delay, he should certainly be justified in tearing his hair.

With love to all, CARL.

* * *

August 29, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

We are having another spell of bad weather so have had no rides since five days ago. I am in advanced pique and should be sent to Tour de Piste after one good morning or evening. Right now it looks like I would be here in pique for some time as the wind is from the west and when it gets there it is a sure bet for seven or eight days.

The dope now is that we are to stay here for a month or so. If this is true, I may, provided we have good weather, be able to finish Ble-

riot. I went on guard at the Bleriot Hangars a couple of nights ago for another fellow. I was out of money, and couldn't get any around here on my letter of credit and was tired of eating at the "Ordinaire," so took his place for four francs. There were two others there with me and we had a pretty good time. You are supposed to guard the Hangars; I don't know what from—certainly a Bleriot is not worth stealing unless for a museum curio. We slept out in the open with our trusty rusty rifles (this is no joke as they handed us out some old carbines that haven't been shot since 1870). Besides a gun they gave us two bullets and a lantern. The other two fellows had never shot a gun and I don't think I could have handled my gun from what I learned at Plattsburg last year so I guess we wouldn't have offered much opposition to Germans.

I went to Bourges yesterday to attend the funeral of one of the fellows here who died from injuries received in an auto accident. (It is certainly a pity to die from an auto accident when in an aviation camp.) His brother who was in the American Ambulance Co. was the only relative here. Besides about twenty men from here, there were seven people from the hospital, one ambulance man and a military escort of six soldiers and two aviation officers. We all followed the hearse, which was draped in an American flag and covered with flowers, from the fellows here and some hospital people, to the military graveyard. The people here certainly take notice of a funeral. As we passed thru the streets every woman stopped and crossed herself and every civilian took off his hat and soldiers saluted. This small funeral almost stopped work in the city for a while. The grave yard was not in itself very attractive as no care had been taken with it and it was filled with military wreaths, which are not very attractive after they have been out in the rain for a month or so. However the situation was great: up on a high hill overlooking the city and I imagine after the war when they have time and money, it will be made into a pretty place.



Here I am on guard. The gun is an 1870 Model. They give you two bullets to shoot the Germans with, you drop these in one of your pockets and immediately forget which one. You can almost see my mustache in this. Notice the leather coat. We also have leather trousers.

A fellow that slept just across from me the first two weeks I was here has since gone to the front and has been reported missing. This means that he probably had to come down behind the German lines. I expect that our “Ordinaire” grub would look like a Thanksgiving dinner to him. Of the other three men that have been here since I have and have gone to the front, one has brought down an “Albatross”—one has been killed and the other has been reported missing. Not much of a record for the new Americans.

I am sending you some pictures which I have taken; I have explained them on the back. If you decide to send a box don't put too much in it as several fellows have just told me that they have gotten only about half of the packages sent to them.

With love to all, CARL.

* * *

September 3rd, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

This morning was the first morning that has been good enough to ride for five days. I got four sorties which gives me thirty-four in the first pique class. I am fortunate in getting so many—most fellows get from fifteen to twenty—but wish that the two French lieutenants in the class above would move up so that I could go up. There is no more new dope as to whether we are to be taken over by the U.S. government but imagine that it will be voluntary. The advantage of going with the United States is that you become a First Lieutenant with a harquer's pay while in the French you are only a corporal until you have thirty hours flying at the front; that is only a matter of from two to three weeks, when you become a sergeant. I figure that the Americans will not do any flying until next spring so that, if the war is not over, I can get a good deal of experience and transfer before they do any real work.

Phil Davis, a Boston bondsman before he became an élève pilote, and I inquired for a room at a country mansion this morning to see if we could move in for a few days and thus pick up a little French. They said we could have a room in one of the shacks for twenty-five cents a day per head. The room is white-washed and painted in good shape and looks quite good so I think we will move in for a few days. It is right on our way to the Bleriot field so won't inconvenience us any.

A Frenchman was killed yesterday while falling in a burning machine. It caught on fire in the air and when landing he hit a telephone pole, turned over and was caught under the machine. Before they could get him out he was so badly burned that he will probably die—better that he did. He was in a Voisin and since I have been here three have caught on fire in the air. This is by far the worst thing that can happen and one's chances are very slim if his machine catches on fire. I have never heard of a Bleriot, Caudron or Nieuport catching so am not worrying about that.

Winter is about with us here. The mornings are right frosty and the fellows that are doing their altitudes have drawn their fur-lined union overalls. When I go out in the morning (5:30 now) I put on a sweater, hair coat, and a big heavy poilu's overcoat. I haven't started to use mittens and ear tabs yet but am digging them out. After I finish this letter I am going to get my allotment of shoes which I have not drawn as I had a pair of U. S. Army shoes. The regular poilu's shoes are made out of cast iron leather and have nice big hob nails in the soles (you must have seen them in pictures of the war). They are great for hardwood floors.

The same daily routine goes on. We go out to the field at 5:30 A. M. After waiting for the officers to come out—the worse the weather the later they come out—we have roll call. When we first came here each man could answer for some of his friends that wanted to sleep and by changing around we used to be able to stay in bed about every other rainy morning, but we have been “found out” so we all have to turn out if a hurricane is blowing. If the weather is good we take out the machines and start work. We work until it becomes bumpy or all the machines are broken—sometimes one can see five or six broken machines in various parts of the field. This doesn't stop all work as they have about a hundred but the head Lieutenant decides that the Americans are not feeling well after we break about five. At nine we go back to the camp—perhaps stop off for something to eat. At 11 o'clock those who have strong constitutions go to mess. I heard some one say that the American soldiers were sick of bacon. I wish that we could have it for Sunday dinner. From eleven until three we sleep, write and read. At three o'clock there is a general roll call for all French and American *Élèves*. After the Captain gives us hell in French we go out to the field again for work or rest as the weather permits. At eight o'clock we are free. At ten o'clock the regular men are in bed. At eleven o'clock even the irregulars are there.

I didn't get a letter from you this week. Has the cook left or has another member of the family gone to the hospital ?

I expect by the time this letter reaches you that you will be wishing you had your husky sons home to paint chairs and clean drawers at the house for you. Cot Reed should be buying his final pair of socks and packing for school. It hardly seems to me as tho we have had any summer. I hope to be in Iowa's corn fields for the next one.

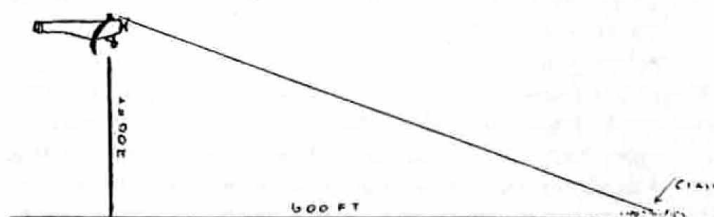
With love to all, CARL.

* * *

Sept. 9, 1917.

DEAR DAD:

The weather has improved; we have had three consecutive days of flying and it looks as though we might get a few more before the customary six-day spell sets in. I am up to tour de piste and have had three sorties, all yesterday. It was quite exciting, my first trip. I had never been up in the air before, with the exception of pique and decoller when I never had time to look around nor turned around. The idea is to leave the ground, make a sort of figure eight and land again where you started. The first time was pretty confusing as everything looks so different when you are up a little ways, and when I had made one turn and tried to see my class I couldn't locate it as it was under my wing. I went on, made another turn and then saw it. The first few times it is also hard to know just when to pique (shut off the motor and turn down) so as to hit your field which has a bad ditch at one end and a forest at the other, so that you have to make a fairly good landing. When I was coming back I waited until my class had passed out of my sight like this:



This is not a good drawing as it doesn't give the correct proportion as when you are 200 feet high (or any height) you can usually see about three times your height ahead, or 600 feet. After my class had passed out of sight I counted five as one fellow told me and piqued and cut off my engine. When you pique you are at about a 45° angle and you feel that you're going to land right on your nose. It seemed to me that I was going to hit in the woods so I turned on my engine, straightened out a little, then after a few seconds that way, piqued again and hit the field O. K. but ran a little past my class. It would have been O. K. if I had kept on with my first attempt. The monitor said the sortie was good enough for the first attempt.

There is nothing new on the transfer proposition. I may decide to transfer now as there seems to be some doubt as to whether we can transfer later if we turn them down now.

One of the monitors called us together this morning for a calling-down on account of some stunts some have done lately. One man when on his examination flight when he was supposed to go to Chateaux, 50 miles away, got lost and flew until he ran out of gasoline before he landed. He found that he was 150 miles from his course. Another, while going to the same place landed in the grounds of a Chateau and stayed there for a day waiting, as he said, for a spark plug. Another fellow made the mistake of thinking that he was to do his altitude instead of a plain ten minute tour. The monitor sent him off, that was last night and the last he saw of him was when disappearing in the clouds. He hasn't been heard from since—I suppose he is getting a good meal at some chateau.

I received your letter, and am ever so much obliged for the smokes. The best way is to send them in small quantities as you say, at intervals of a week or so. One fellow told me that he had a package sent over every week and had received the last six.

I am glad Joe is getting some real work at last. There were some Am. mechanics here that were studying engines. They said that the largest aviation camp (I have heard of about four *largest* ones) in the world was to be built at the camp Joe is leaving. There will be 150 more Am. mechanics here (if rumor is correct) within a few days.

I told Mother in the last letter I wrote her that I had not received any letter for that week but it came on Tuesday instead of Saturday.

With love to all, CARL



Sept. 17, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I just received your letter dated Aug. 26; seven days ago I received two dated Aug. 16 and 17. I noticed the letter dated Aug. 26 was stamped Aug. 27, four P. M. This looks like you were intrusting them to someone to mail, with my old habit of carrying your mail in my inside pocket for a day or so.

You say that my last letters had two cents due. I have never put any stamps on any of them as you say, and don't understand this new wrinkle. If there is any postage demanded by the U. S. the French government is supposed to pay it. Do you suppose that 2c French stamp would help any? Let me know if any more are held up and in the meantime, I will inquire about "what is up."

It sure must have been great to have Joe home; it must have been *great* for Joe to get home, to family, strawberry ice cream, chicken, sheets and hot water. I imagine he could tell you some good stories about soldiering and some of the ambulance men around the town what real hard life they had before them. I have certainly had an easy time compared with him. It will certainly be hard luck if he misses out as an aviator after he has waited so long. He should have come to France and joined this service; they are not so particular. I don't see why a man should not fly with glasses fitted as goggles. One of my best friends here wears this sort.

Doc Nesbit tells me that Heine Maynard was home for a few days before going to his post. I imagine the new officers and soldiers coming home make quite a stir; or have they become so common that the civilian is a novelty? Don't you think that, if I came home, my blue uniform and mustache would outdo their stir?

Send those socks along. I am overloaded (I would like some high, golf socks) but can find lots of places for them. The French soldiers are ready for anything in the way of clothes—I expect the Americans will be before long.

Here is what we get at the front for pay: Corporal (we are corporals until we have flown 30–40 hours over the lines), 40 francs per month for rank, 2 francs per day for flying service; Sergeant (that is about as high as we can get), 80 fr. for rank, 4 fr. per day for flying service.

We had a big day at the barracks when the mail came this week. Nearly every fellow got a package of some sort, cigarettes, candy, nuts, etc., and we all set to and had a real Xmas feed. Today the Aero Club of America gave each man a package of dandy cigarettes so that, for a week at least, we have smoked like bankers.

An American Aero squadron has come here for training. They certainly looked good to us, trim and businesslike—something, trimness and a business-like attitude, that has never been seen here before. A man that can stay in this army, it may be the same for all, and not lose his pep, ambition, initiative, in fact if he can do anything but swear at the sergeants, lieuts., captains, etc., he can do more than anyone here. The army is certainly the place for the lazy man and one that likes to do as he is told.

We will get a permission of 10 days the first of October, unless *all* dope is wrong. I think I will migrate to some warm swimming hole, perhaps Nice. To take a plunge, then bake in the sun and think how far away I am from Avord is my idea of a good permission.

Have to hurry to roll-call.

With love to all, CARL.

* * *

Sept. 28, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

As the mail is four days overdue, I fear, as some fellows have been saying, that the transport that was carrying it, has been sunk and my letters, and perhaps my cigars and nuts, are now in some fish's stomach. I only hope they enjoy them as much as I would. Of course there is still a chance of them coming but my hopes have descended to almost zero.

We have, at last, been favored with good weather. For two weeks we have flown every morning and night. I have had more flying in that time than in all previous time. I have finished Bleriot! Never thought I could do it before old age. I am now in the 60 H. P. class (Bleriot) waiting for a place in the Caudron school. When that will come I am not sure but hope within a week. These Caudrons are lumber-busses compared to Bleriotics but we have to do our brevet

work on them on account of the scarcity of Bleriot machines. The Caudron is a bi-plane and much larger and clumsier than the Bleriot. We learn how to run them by taking a few sorties in a double-command machine and then are sent up alone and proceed to do the stunts necessary for our brevet.

Yesterday was a bad day for accidents. Seven accidents and five pilots killed is about the best I have heard of for one day. One man was killed when two Penguins (the half-size machine you first learn to roll on the ground) smashed together! How I can't figure out. The second American ever killed (all these others were Frenchmen) in a school in France was killed at Pau last week. He (Meeker was his name) came over on my boat and was liked by all the fellows there and here. In the Bleriot school all is rosy. I have never heard of a man getting seriously hurt in this school and have seen myself, some falls that would kill a man in another machine.

This flying game is great sport. I suppose Sis can tell you something of it. You put on your helmet, climb into the machine, adjust the belt and try out the controls. If they seem to be good you shout "essence, contact" (gas, spark) to the mechano, he gives the propeller a pull and the engine starts (sometimes) with a roar. The engine always runs full speed so the only way you can keep from moving and not kill the engine is to cut the spark and catch the engine again before it kills. It is great to see, especially when you are in one yourself, four or five machines standing, waiting for the signal to go, with their engine being turned on and off and then see one, when given the signal, start off with a roar, run along the ground for sixty to a hundred yards, then rise gradually and sail off into the distance. It is also great to see the machines land, one after another. You see the first one bank around the last corner before the landing. Then it sails along until it gets to the pique (descending) position when you see it dive down at about a 45° angle the engine dies out just as soon as the machine is headed down; the pilot may have misjudged his field, or he may have a wind to contend with, in either of these cases he has to bank the machine up and turn so as to hit the field; when about 150 yards from the ground you hear the engine sputter and from then until on the ground the pilot keeps his engine ready for use in case he has to fly on and take another chance at landing; about 30 yards from the ground the machine begins to flatten out and lose speed; at 3 yards it sails along the ground on a horizontal and finally, when settling, the pilot

pulls the control stick back and sets the tail on the ground at the same time the wheels land.

The best sortie of the day is the first one in the morning when the sun is just rising and the mist is still filling the lower valleys which makes the land beneath look like a great lake dotted with small islands. As yet I have only been up 500 metres but that is high enough to see a good deal. From 500 metres one starts his pique from over Avord and when I have walked that distance it seemed a good ways.

I had a funny experience the other day when landing. In class that morning one machine had come down on another just after the first one landed. No one was hurt, but we were all trying to be careful not to let it happen again. On my way back to the hangars, I got up 400 metres. When I piqued I looked around for any other machines but the coast seemed to be clear. When about 100 metres from the ground I suddenly noticed a shadow of a machine on the ground in front of me. I put on my engine and straightened up but then it dawned upon me that it was my own so I piqued again. But this time I saw two so I straightened up again and looked around for another machine but couldn't see another one anywhere near so I piqued again. I was only about 50 metres up by this time. I saw the two shadows again and had made up my mind to pull up and go around the field again when another machine sailed out from my left wing and landed. I landed O. K. The other machine was run by a new man that, as all of them, never look around for other machines—they are always too busy keeping the machine upright. He had been under my wing all the time—about the only place I could not see him.

The U.S. Army officers were here last week to inspect the men that want to go over. About two-thirds went. I am going to wait awhile and see just what they are going to do with these men. I can go over any time so think it better to stay here until the U.S. gets well under way. I hope you are all well,

With love, CARL.

* * *

Oct. 1, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

Just a note to tell you that I got your letters (two Sept. 2 and 10) for this week O. K. In a letter I wrote a couple of days ago I said that I thot the boat carrying this week's mail must have been sunk, but

apparently not. With your two letters, I got one from Catherine and Mr. Condict (one from each) one from Geo. Bennigan, the ass't. Bus. manager of the Olio and the man who did all my work after I left, one from Dex Keezer, who is working hard in a camp in Kansas, and a postal from Neva Lange who lives in Dubuque and goes to Smith. That was a heap of mail that gave me something to do for almost a day.

I am going to Paris this evening provided my permission gets by the Captain. I am now waiting for it and have no fear of not getting it either tonight or tomorrow; it may get lost, as several fellow's have, while going from the Captain of the Bleriot School to the Capt. of the school but in that case, all I will have to do is to wait while a chaser is sent after it. I will only be in Paris for about 30 hours which isn't much time considering that it takes about six to get there. But then, after one has spent three and one-half months at Avord, he would travel a good way for a short time in a different environment. I don't expect to do much except to sit and talk with some of the city folk at the street cafes and watch the people pass; you can see to what condition an Avordite comes. I also have a few purchases to make.

I have just talked to Rousseau, my French teacher, and he tells me that if I leave my permission in the office until tomorrow morning, he can have it extended for a day which will make it possible for me to leave tomorrow afternoon, reach Paris tomorrow at 7:00 P. M. and thus save an all-night trip as I would have to make if I went tonight.

We have been having fair meals lately, not at the Ordinaire, but at the farm café, that I have already told you about. About 15 of the Bleriot men stop off at this place every morning after work and have chocolate, bread (not white but war bread that sharpens your teeth but seems to tighten the belt) and eggs, boiled or sur le plat (on the plate). The eggs are large but now and then have an odor all their own. About one out of every three mornings we take a chance on the butter and usually find that it is a 50-50 guess as to whether it is butter or cheese. However the place is a life-saver and we don't mind if the eggs and butter are a little on edge as most of us have colds.

This meal costs about 60c so you can see that it is no "Child's" that we are eating at. Eggs cost 8c apiece, butter 6c, a bowl of hot chocolate 20c.

At night the madame cooks some meat, beefsteak, rabbit or chicken, and potatoes or cabbage. The beefsteak is good, tough but tasty, the rabbit is pretty slim pickings, and the chicken is not the

spring variety, but is appetizing to one that hasn't had anything but the above mentioned breakfast since morning. All in all, we consider ourselves lucky and don't complain. Of course, all these meals simply act as a foundation for a talk-fest. There is a great crowd of fellows here and after talking over the pros and cons of aviation, how to save our necks if we lose one wing, how Guynemer lost his life (which no one knows), how long before Germany will have to call on her stable boys to go into aviation, how many Boche we would be satisfied in getting, whether we will wear our medals or not, how long the bad weather will last, how long before we will finish Bleriot, whether, if we had one shot and had the kaiser and the Lieut. Of the Bleriot Piste before us, we would shoot the first or the second. After discussing these and many other questions, we consider that the day has been well spent and go back to our bunks.

I would like to get home and take a crack at some of those cigars that Joe had access to; don't believe he could outdo me. I haven't received any package yet, but do not look for them before six weeks from the time it was sent. I will write Mrs. Peddy as soon as the box arrives. If it doesn't come I will thank her for the fishes. Also Josephine—A fellow had a box of candy and cookies from the States last week that tasted like they had just been rolled out of the oven. I will also take care of all sweaters, socks, etc., of the community.

The soldiers must still have that glamor and charm about them if they can carry off cooks; she will probably be back before long.

I hope Joe is getting along well. I have just received some pictures and am sending you a few.

With love to all, CARL.

* * *

October 7, 1917.

DEAR JIM:

Was glad to receive your letter dated September 13th, and enclosing some letters of Mother's. I haven't been writing many letters as Mother has been sending, as you say, the ones I send home around the circuit. This saves me a lot of trouble and gives you my "bull" in toto.

I have just finished a long letter to Dad,—incidentally striking him for some more money: I suppose when I came over here he figured he

had received his last strike letter, but French pay forced me to it so I won't repeat the tales of life in Avord.

If you are giving me the straight dope on the work you are doing I think that it is you who will be old soon. If I stay here much longer, I will be fat as I wish. To keep our brains from getting soft we have to play chess.

I was young and foolish and ignorant of French ways, when I wrote on July 19th, that I would be thru in six weeks. I have given up trying to guess when I will be through but perhaps I will eat Christmas Dinner at the front.

Those cookies you mention sound like they were worth taking a chance on. I would like to see if Gwyneth is as good a cook as you say she is. The war bread now tastes fairly good to me, so the chances are she will get a high mark from me even tho they are a little stale.

I hope you "busted" the strike O. K.

With love to you and Gwyneth,

CARL.

* * *

Oct. 7, 1917.

DEAR DAD:

I received your package of cigarettes yesterday. I am ever so much obliged for them. The cigars, as the gang said, made one feel like a banker, the cigarettes are the brand I always smoked, tho, how you knew it is beyond me, and the tobacco, altho I don't smoke a pipe much myself, is great stuff to use to bribe the instructors and doctors, to say nothing of the jail keeper, and to give to the mechanics just to keep them in good enough humor to keep us from going up in machines that are liable to fall to pieces en route. The French tobacco, what you can get of it, is not a kind that carries away the blue ribbons so a Frenchman would tinge his good reputation for an American cigarette.

I don't know whether the "care of French Minister of War" had any effect but the package came through O. K., so I would advise putting it on the others. This matter of treating the mechanics well is quite important—as well as expensive. We have to give them five francs in each class when we enter it. About the only impression of speed one

gets in this school is the apparent speedy recurrence of this little formality. At the front this same formality grows in importance. There it is necessary to impress them, not only with words but also with gold, that your machine has to be in the very best of condition and when they are not going up in the machine, the "very best of condition" doesn't mean the same condition that it does to the pilot.

I went to Paris last Thursday. This was my first trip (excepting Bourges) since I have been here (since June 16) and I confess, I felt rather peculiar and rusty. In getting my permission I ran amuck of French "redtape" and slowness. To get a permission one has to apply to the Capt. of the Bleriot school. If agreeable to him it goes to the Capt. of the school who signs it, sends it to another office where you get it at 11 A. M. the day before it is dated. The Capt. of the Bleriot school accepted my request and sent the permission to the Capt. of the school who returned it to the Capt. of the Bleriot in order to find if I had taken my aviation exam., which I had. This made my permission one day late, and also caused me to lose some work on the field. When I had satisfied the Bleriot Capt. that I had passed my exam he said that I could take a slip he would give me and I could go direct to the bureau for my permission, but when I got there I was told that I would have to get the Capt. (school) to sign it again. I took it to the Capt. but found him out. The permission finally came down to the bureau the next day (two days late) with the time, 24 hours crossed out and 12 hours put above it. So after all my trouble I only got 12 hours in Paris.

However, I had a good time in the city. I got there at 7:30 P. M. I had a ripping meal after which I went to the "Olympia," the town vaudeville show and the place where you can always find all your friends that are in Paris. I ran across all the Avord men on permission and one fellow from school that is in the Paris ambulance service.

The next morning I ran errands for myself and the fellows here. That afternoon I sat in the street cafes and talked with the fellows I met. The city is just full of red, black and blue uniforms (in many variations) with medals on as when I was there before. Outside of Paris one sees few medals so I figure that those who have medals go to Paris and those that haven't go somewhere less popular. I came home that night at 6:00 P. M. I had to stay all night in Bourges. At the hotel I asked for a bath and hot water (they have hot-water days the same as meat-days). The madam said she had both but when I got to my room there was no bath room so I thought that I had to go out to

the bath room. She came back soon with a pitcher of hot water which was her idea of a bath and hot water. So I took my last bath for the winter, if it stays as cold as it is now, in a bowl.

It is right cold here now, makes one think of football, and makes me think that the best thing that you could send me for Xmas would be a fur coat which I could wear in the daytime, and perhaps, use a sleeping bag at night. Tonight I go to bed with socks and a sweater on, and as you know, with my underwear, altho not very sanitary, as it gets very damp if taken off, and next to a damp swimming suit, damp underwear is about the most distasteful thing I know of.

I have 80 pounds left on my letter of credit. If possible I would like to keep that much in the bank in case I should suddenly need some. (I have put my letter at Morgan-Harjes Co. Paris). One man tells me that at the front, it is wise to always carry a good deal of money when flying in case you should be forced to land in Germany. With money one can manage to get along, without one has to live on the prison rations which are not all that is to be desired and cause indigestion, dysentery and other inconveniences. If I ever get into the Am. Army I can support myself, but the 36 francs we get now does not get one very far.

I have received lots of letters this week. Tell Mother to keep up the good work. I suppose she has to rack her brain to think of something to write about, but mention of all the daily commonplace is music to my ears. Had a letter from Jim, in which he enclosed several of Mother's.

I was sent to Caudron today. This will speed matters a lot.

With love to all, CARL

* * *

Oct. 13, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I received today, your's and Dad's letters dated Sept. 21 and Sept. 24 respectively. That is a good idea to send any news clippings as they are very interesting.

The bad weather continues and I begin to think that I may be caught in this hole for the winter. If that seems very probable I will change to the American Army—but that may be a process taking

three months. I have been here four months now and have only finished what could be done in half the time in a school with any organization or system. The people responsible should be court-martialed for lax duty. I was sent to Caudron last week and when I reported no one knew whose class I was in. As no one knew they said I would have to ask the monitor who sent me up, but he had left for a permission. I went back and a monitor told me to come in his class. I waited two days for a ride but didn't get any as he was finishing up the men ahead. On the third day he left for a permission and no provision was made for another monitor. The next day a stray monitor saw us standing at one side, so he volunteered his services. He only had time to take up one man. The next day (morning was bad weather) he spent all the time in giving one of his friends a ride. The last two days have been too windy to fly so you can see that I have not progressed very far in Caudron.

In order to insure us (the Am.) comfortable (?) quarters for the winter, we have been moved from our fairly comfortable barracks to some formerly inhabited by poilus of the artillery school, but which still have many subtle suggestions of their pre-poilu inhabitants—fine bred artillery horses. However, the walls are brick and white-washed and the floors cemented so, remembering Valley Forge, we can at least say, "it might be worse."

I got Josephine Nauman's cookies and nuts and found them as fresh as tho they had been baked yesterday. They were great and the gang and I sure enjoyed them. Money would probably be the most convenient and sensible thing to send for Xmas, but a box with most anything in it, candies, cookies, etc., has an element of interest that no check has. Tell Mrs. Powers not to worry about "Heffy" as he has probably been on the jump since he left home. He might have been on board boat five weeks as some of the Am. that came here were.

I hope you are all well.

With love to all, CARL.

* * *

Oct. 22, 1917.

DEAR DAD:

I find that I will have to have five letters of recommendation when I transfer to the Am. Army. All my ambulance letters are in

N. Y. so I guess that you will have to go to the trouble of getting me some more. If possible, get one or two from army officers as they say these count for more than any others.

I have finished the double-command and lache (when you first ride alone) classes in Caudron and am waiting for a machine to do my brevet work. In the lache class I did six “a gauche” (making a sharp turn when coming down without a motor) two serpentes (going from left to right in sharp turns on descending glide) and two spirals (making complete turn on descending glide). All this stuff is easy enough, especially in a Caudron, as all you have to do is set the controls and let it go. In the spirals I got sort of mixed up, lost my bearings but I sat still until I saw the landmark, a farm, then came out of the spiral and piqued down. Yesterday four of us were told to get ready for altitude (an hour over 2000 metres) but after we had put on our fur combinations, fur overshoes, fur helmets, fur gloves and all the rest, the lieut. came along and decided that we had to wait for our regular machines and couldn’t use the double-command ones as our monitor said we could.

We were reviewed last week by the sous-sectary of aviation and the commander of this division. It was quite a sight to see about 800 aviators of five nationalities, each in their respective dress costumes lined up together. The Am. nearly broke up the party when a French bugler let out a blast after all the rest had finished, but we managed to keep fair step and lines when going past His Honor; after the show a Frenchman did some acrobatics (in aeroplane) that were far the best I have ever seen. Most men go up 2,000 or 3,000 metres to do any stunts, but he did his within about 300 metres of the ground.

The weather has been fairly good lately—clear sky and little wind, but we are bothered with mists nearly every morning, which holds up all work until about one. I haven’t received any mail for about 8 days but expect that it will come thru in bunches. The last package I received was from Josephine N. Two weeks ago someone made a big haul at our barracks and got my leather coat, belt and camera. I think a vest-pocket camera would be as good a gift as possible for Xmas. I would like to have one at the front.

With love to all, CARL.



Oct. 26, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

There has been no mail for about two weeks; suppose that it will come in batches as it did the last time. Since I wrote you last I have progressed quite a bit. I have finished double-command Caudron, done my serpentines and spirals, done my altitude and one cross country flight, as I said in Dad's letter. The serpentines and spirals were very easy as you only had to set the controls and let her slide—of course you had to be sure that they were set right. I had a rotten time on my altitude as, in spite of a fur combination over about all I could get on, I was quite chilly. In the first place my helmet blew loose and as I couldn't take my hands off my controls long enough to fix it, I had to sail around for an hour and twenty minutes with only my goggles on my head. I was over 2100 metres for an hour and up to 2600 once. It was a cloudy day so that I was just under them most of the time and in them now and then. I was pretty lucky as, almost as my hour was up, a layer of clouds came in under me so that I would have had to descend even if my time had not been up, as one is sure to get lost if he doesn't see the ground.

Al Ash, who sleeps next to me, had a cloud come between himself and the camp so he marked a town to guide by, but a cloud soon covered that. He did this with two or three other towns until finally he came down 20 kilometers from camp. He caused a good deal of excitement among the farmers.

School was let out so that the kids might see an airplane and an American. On my trip to Chateauroux and back I had a better time as I had to follow my map and compass, which was something to keep me busy, and had a new country to see. It was very windy and cloudy so that I could only fly at 800 metres and made slow progress going down (1 hr. 40 m.) but good progress coming back (50 m.) The wind made it very bumpy so that with keeping the machine upside up and finding my course I had an interesting time.

As soon as I finish another trip to Chateauroux and return and two to Romorantin and return, I will be done with my brevet work and will then be a licensed pilot. After that I go on a Nieuport and from there to Pau. With a little good weather I should be thru here within a month. As it is today I couldn't finish in six months—wind, rain and

clouds. Bill Loomis, one of the Amherst men I came over with, finished and left for Pau two days ago.

I hope we get some mail from the States soon—getting tired of running up to the Y. M. C. A. twice a day just to find “no mail yet.”
With love to all, CARL.



Oct. 26, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I am writing this from an American aviation camp at which I had to land on account of motor trouble on my second trip from Avord to Chateauroux. I left camp yesterday morning with ten other Americans, but only got as far as this place (they tell me I can't name the town) when I had to descend on account of motor trouble. I left Avord in a strong south wind and as Chateauroux is southwest, I couldn't make much progress even when my engine was turning over 1150 revolutions and with my tail high, to keep from climbing. About half way en route one cylinder went bad—a little later two more died. I could have staggered along with two gone, but with three on the mortality list I felt like a fluttering leaf looks, so I picked out a good-looking field and landed. I was five kilometres from this town but, at that, the first person who ran up was an American attached to a surveying squad. I got out and cleaned the plugs of the three cylinders that seemed to be dead and tried the engine out, with some of the surveying gang holding the machine, but she wouldn't run right so I left it there.

Something sort of funny happened when I was testing the engine. I got one of the Yanks to hold the throttle while I turned the propeller to crank the engine and told him to throttle it down as soon as it started, but when it began the wind and noise scared him so that he got rattled and pulled it open instead of closing it. The machine started down the field with the throttle man hanging to the seat and another Yank who was standing inside the tail wires and frame all tangled up and being rolled along the ground. In the meantime I was yelling at the throttle man to cut it off, but he didn't seem to understand so I had to jump in between the wires and cut it. Nothing was hurt—thank heavens—only the two Yanks were a little scared.

I took my altimeter, compass and paraphernalia and went to the surveyor's camp and had dinner. Had the first white bread I have had or seen since I left the States. After dinner I started out to hunt for a telephone and police headquarters so as to get a guard for the machine. I finally found the office of the national police and told them what I wanted and they gave me a guard and a man to conduct me to the city post-office where I telephoned back to camp and told them where I was. Then I called up the Am. camp here and asked them for a mechanic. As it was late in the afternoon they told me to come out to the camp for the night and they would fix me up in the morning. They sent a fellow with an Indian motorcycle and side-car for me. It seemed to me that there were about as many Am. in the town as French. Am. trucks and motorcycles tore around the narrow streets at a rate that must have made all the inhabitants sign their wills.

I stayed at the officers' quarters and will say that they live like kings. Grub! I had chops, white baking powder biscuits, tomatoes, potatoes, coffee and canned apricots last night, and oatmeal, pancakes, coffee and white bread this morning. The gang back at the camp would give their necks for a feast like that. When I tell them about it, I expect that they will stop here on every trip. Just to top off the party, whose bed do you suppose I slept in?—Quentin Roosevelt's. Quentin was away so they just chucked me in his bunk. It is raining cats and dogs now so I will have to stay here for awhile—can't say that it makes me uncomfortable. Hope you are all well.

With love to all, CARL.

* * *

Nov. 1, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I am writing this while sitting in a "28" (*censored*) waiting for the rain to stop—which it won't do today and as the only paper I have is this letter from Geo. W., I have to write on the back of it.

I received two of your letters written on Sept. 27 and Oct. 7. You seem to be a little "dans l'air" because I have not answered some of your questions but I guess that those letters are still en route or were sent to the bottom by the "subs." For Xmas I would like a vest-pocket camera and a box of eats. I guess it would be better to buy an overcoat, pair of shoes, pair of goggles and such stuff here.



French
Aviator's Insignia

As to those packages I have received one package of smokes from Dad and a box of cookies from Josephine. I haven't given up hopes of the rest. Wish you had sent Sis' cookies along as they would not have been much of a loss to you if they had gone astray and would have tasted good to me, if they arrived. If you send any more packages address them c-o Morgan-Harjes & Co., 31 Boulevard Haussman, Paris. This is where I keep my letter of credit so I will keep them posted as to my location. Better send them all there.

I have finished my brevet so am now a licensed pilot and a corporal in the French Army. I have finished one class in (*censored*) and should be thru here in four good days.

With love, CARL.

(Please omit the Sunday menu from your letters. It doesn't interest me.)

REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

MINISTÈRE DE LA GUERRE

Aéronautique Militaire

BREVET D'AVIATEUR MILITAIRE

*Le Ministre de la Guerre,
Vu l'Instruction en date du 20 Mai 1914 sur
la délivrance du Brevet relatif à la conduite des
appareils d'aviation.*

*Vu l'avis favorable des Commissions d'examen
des candidats au dit Brevet*

*Décerne à la date du 30 Octobre 1917.
à M^r Chapman Charles
Soldat*

le Brevet d'Aviateur Militaire.

Fait à Paris, le

Tollaud



N^o 9.645



Nov. 15, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I just got back from my ten-day permission. I went to Paris with five other men and stayed there for three days just sitting around at the Chatam Hotel talking with all kinds of Americans. The Chatam is the headquarters for all the Am. in Paris. We left Paris at 9:00 on the third night for Nice. On account of the great number of troops going to Italy there are now only two trains to Nice, so you can imagine the crowd we got into. I had a seat for a few hours, but "Al" Ash and "Ed" Rehms had to stand up for the greater part of 24 hours. We had to change cars at Marseille, so we stopped off there for two days. Marseille will always have a warm place in our hearts because of the treatment the people gave us. Am. are still novel there so we were treated with exceptional courtesy at the hotel and all cafes and restaurants we patronized. At Bassa's restaurant we had the best meal we (Al, Ed and myself) have had since we came to France. The head-waiter spoke Eng. and had a brother in New York, so because, I suppose, he liked to show how well he could speak our language and felt he had a special claim on us because of his brother being in Am., he saw that we had the best the house could give—soup, lobster, beefsteak, potatoes, ice cream, coffee and cigars are the details I remember.

There is a great deal of activity in M----- principally military. The streets are crowded with naval officers of all nations. The stores and cafes seem to be running full blast. The city is much better looking than I expected. We took a ride along the bay and down the best residential streets and must say that it has some very good looking spots.

When we got to Nice we regretted that we had not gone directly there from school. The climate is about as good as anyone could ask for—just like a beautiful warm fall day at home. Although the water was a little cool we went in swimming twice. We spent one day in a ride to Monte Carlo and another in a ride to Cannes. The ride to Monaco, up on the mountainside along the sea, was about as beautiful a ride as I ever expect to take. We went as far as the Italian border and I sent you a postal from the Italian side. At Monaco we couldn't get into the gambling rooms, but we each got a five franc chip for a sou-

venir. The Prince of Monaco wasn't home so we couldn't call but we wandered around his country (about 15 sq. miles) at freedom.

The ride to Cannes was primarily to meet some Canadians and Am. girls that are in a hospital there. From that point of view the ride was almost a failure. One of the Canadian girls felt it her duty to "squench" us Am. and take out some of our "cockyness" which she seems to think all Am. have. The good-looking girl which our escort, a Canadian officer, said would make the trip worth while and the one that played ragtime were both out so can't say that the social end of the trip was a success. However, we had a beautiful ride thru the mountains and saw some interesting sights, such as villages built upon the peaks of rocks. On our way over to Cannes we stopped at Grosse where more perfume is made than any other place in the world (sounds like a Waterloo enthusiast telling about gas engines).

We visited the factory and I bought a bottle for Sis but our Canadian friend was so desirous of making a good impression with the girls that he insisted on giving them my perfume and some candy of Al's that he had bought for his best girl at Paris.

I met some very nice people at Nice, among them a Mr. Blake and a Mr. Dunn, who is a Colonel in the French army, who took us around the town and introduced us to some of the elect. I certainly hated to leave Nice and its climate but could look forward to a speedy return to the same weather while at Pau. One thing of interest that turned up during talks with Mr. Dunn and several Canadian officers was that they all seem to think that the war will last three more years. You can tell Joe and any others that are in haste to get here to take their time as the war seems to be a permanent institution. A Canadian officer told me he figured just as the Am. do, that he was getting in on the last of the war when he got here 18 months ago.

When I got back here I found three letters from you, one from Dad and one from Sis—all written between the 10th and 22nd of Oct. I am afraid that you are missing out on about half of my letters. Lately I have not had time to write as many as formerly but up to two weeks ago I was writing from one to two a week. We get our letters here in bunches and I hope that you will get all mine one time or another. If you don't hear from me don't worry as if anything happens you will hear immediately from the government and from some of the fellows.

On my return from Nice I was so unfortunate as to lose my valise. When I was in the dining car my car was cut off with my suitcase in it. I telegraphed back and hope to get it soon.

There is not much to answer in your letters, but they are interesting. It is peculiar how all the commonplace things have an interest when one is away. I trust that you can get enough coal to keep the old house up to its customary 90°. It is a good thing you are not here as you would do well if you could find any place except a bakery oven warm enough for you. I met a lot of people that were going to Nice for the winter on account of the scarcity of coal in Paris, but now a good many are afraid of the recent German push in Italy, so they are sort of up against a tough proposition.

Tell all my corresponding friends to address me at Morgan-Harjes & Co., 31 Rue Haussman, Paris. I have almost given up hope of getting those packages you sent. I have only received one package from Dad and one from Josephine N. I hope to have better luck with my new address.

I bought some Xmas presents for the family and a few others when in Paris and sure hope that they will get home safely. They are at present in my suitcase, so I have a double interest in getting it back.

With best love, CARL.

Will leave here within five days.

Nov. 29th, 1917.

DEAR DAD:

This is Thanksgiving, Dad, and I will say that it sure has been some day, but before I tell you of the day I will let you know where I am and what I have done since I wrote you last. I finished my perfection Nieupoort work at Avord about six days ago and bid a welcome farewell to that hamlet. I will say though that I will always be glad to sit down with any of the fellows and talk about the Avord days.

I went to Paris for two days, with two other fellows, in order to take my examination for the American Army. I passed it O. K. and was recommended for a 2nd lieutenancy until I go to the front when I will be made a 1st lieutenant, at least that is what Major Gros said, but I am afraid that I, as well as the other fellows are in for a 2d lieutenancy for good. I will go right on thru here and go to the French Escadrille until the American Army is ready for pilots at the front.

I arrived here (Pau) three days ago and have found it a much more agreeable place than Avord. Pau is right down in the Pyrennes—this makes it attractive for pleasure seekers, but not so pleasant for aviators who have to make forced landings every now and then. If one was the least inclined to deserting, he could fly over to Spain without the least trouble. One American did go over the mountains and found that when he turned around the wind was too strong and that he was going tail first for Madrid. He managed to get back by changing his altitude. Yesterday we buried one of our fellows who was killed three days ago. He worked all morning doing acrobatics, then went to the next class without eating and fainted in his machine. All the fellows were there,—a good number of the American people that live here, and the captain of the school. His name was Fowler.

Today,—I am back to Thanksgiving. I had my first work, namely four simple “tour de pistes.” This afternoon all the Americans were given a royal dinner (turkey) at the Hotel Gassion. There were about 47 in all, including about 15 American soldiers. I am enclosing the menu and you can see that there was nothing lacking. To cap the day I found three packages from Mother and Katherine Chapman. Believe me they were welcomed. Mother sent a sweater, socks and wristlets and cigarettes. Altho Katherine sent me the same things in knit-wear, I can use it all as it is getting colder and *colder*. Katherine also sent some candy and cigarettes. All this stuff is greatly appreciated, because a package from home is always welcomed, and cigarettes are very scarce now and candy is out of the question. The sweaters fit very well. Did Mother knit the one she sent me? I also want to thank you for the 100 pounds which you deposited for me. I know I have been spending a good deal of money for war times and will try and make this go until I am taken over by the American Army. I haven’t got hold of my suitcase yet, but hope to have it soon. I am afraid that your Xmas presents are going to be a little late, but hope to get them there by the 4th. Speaking of Xmas and the 4th makes me think of when I told a Frenchman that we had a holiday today and he said “what and Xmas too.” I didn’t tell him that New Year’s was a holiday also. I wish that you would send me the newspaper clippings of the E-W football game which I expect is about in session now.

With love to all, CARL.

Perhaps you had better add “Pilote Americain” to my address.



DEAR MOTHER:

I have received a letter from Dad dated Nov. 3, one from Jim dated Nov. 8, one from you dated Nov. 7, 11 and 14. These were all forwarded from Avord so I think that I will get all my packages O. K. I also have a box of fruit at Avord turned over to me by a Mr. Chapman of Syracuse who has a son over here by the name of C. R. Chapman whose mail I used to get and then had to re-forward. I wrote a couple of postals to his home telling them that C. R. was probably not getting his mail. C. R. has returned to the States and as he left before he received this fruit his father turned it over to me. Pretty nice I say. From your account of the packages en route for me I can see a *grand* and *glorious* Xmas coming.

I have gotten track of my lost valise so you have something coming—not much to be sure. That is a good idea of sending the tobacco, etc., in small packages. It will be fine for both you and Joe in San Antonio, sounds like a warm place. We have used up our four-day supply of coal in two days. Suppose we will have to sacrifice a few beds to keep the fire burning until next ration. I wish I had some of Joe's experience with aeroplanes. It will be a great benefit to him later. We don't know a thing about the construction or testing of a machine, consequently the engine or a wing might be ready to fall off and we would be none the wiser. Did I tell you that I took my exam for the Am. Army and passed O. K.? I don't know when I will be transferred but don't care much as I will go right on with the French training and to the French front. Am sending Joe's letters home in another envelope.

Happy Xmas and love to all the family, CARL.



*Excerpts from Diary Sent Home
with Carl's Effects*

Dec. 4, 1917—This morning I got up, as usual, at 7:00 A. M. for roll-call. After that, also as usual, I beat it down to the canteen, with the rest of the Americans, for a bowl of chocolate and some bread before going out to work. I got out to the piste about in time to miss

the assignment of machines, which is just what I wanted as I want to “stall” in this place until the 14th when I hope to be able to go to Cazaux, the machine-gun school. As assignments are only made on the 1st and 15th for Cazaux it is up to me to be late and “malade” enough to hold me up until the 14th. This afternoon I flew for an hour in “vol de groupe”—the class is supposed to give practice in group flying, but one usually flies alone over the mountains or down the river to Biarritz. I was supposed to meet a Frenchman over Pau at 1000 metres, but I started first, waited there for twenty minutes, but as he didn’t come and I only had an hour to stay up I didn’t wait any longer. I started to climb and go for the mountains, but when I got to 3000 metres my engine began to “act up” and as I was a long way from a good landing spot I thought I better come back. I will say that those mountains seen from a few thousand metres, enough to be above the clouds, with the sun shining on the snow-covered peaks, is about as beautiful a sight as I have ever seen. On one side the mountains, underneath the foothills with small towns scattered thru the valleys, and on the other side the plain, cut into small squares that make it look as regular as a patch blanket, makes a sight that few but birds and aviators have the fortune to see. When my hour was up I tried a few spirals to the right and left but didn’t have much success. The machine kept slipping into a vrille (a nose dive with the machine turning with the body as an axis) I came down safely and made a good landing.

Tomorrow I am due for from two to four hours and can only hope that I get the machine Phil Davis had today. He could cut his engine down to 1000 revolutions and let go of his “manche á balai” (control stick)—he did this for fifteen minutes while he took three pictures on one film, changed the film and exposed the other roll.

Dec. 5—This morning I flew for an hour in “vol de groupe.” This time it was really in groupe. Two fellows and I left the hangars to meet over a small village near by at 1000 metres. We all met but one Frenchman, as I found out afterwards, wanted to go up in the foothills and land at a chateau to see one of his best girls, so he left us soon. I followed my man for an hour. It is not as easy as I thought it might be. One has to keep about 100 metres to the rear and on one side and a little above. You find that you climb or sink or go ahead or fall back unless you continually regulate the gas.

This afternoon I flew for another hour and, this time, did not bother about hunting up another man to chase as I wanted to try a few experiments. I flew for ten minutes without touching my manche

á balai, regulating my course with my feet and engine. I think that one could land a machine without seriously hurting himself, altho probably smashing the machine, by using the engine power to raise and settle and use the feet to steer. I tried a few vertical banks with engine on and found it a speedy way to turn around. I have two more hours in this class.

Dec. 6—I rode for two hours and a half at one stretch this morning—my long-distance record. I started out for Biarritz but after riding for 30 minutes decided that I was getting an uncomfortably long distance from home, and that it would be a long jaunt back in case I had a panne—I have just heard that Tom Buffum had a panne when over Biarritz and had to land near the city. This long cross-country flying is strictly “defendu” so Tom may get a little prison when he returns. When coming back I saw a plane way down under me, so I thought I would go down and keep him company. When I got down I found he was just high enough to miss the trees and villages. We rode along, side by side, for mile after mile, just cutting the tops of the houses and trees. This is great sport as you can see what is going on on the ground. The only things of interest in flying are on the ground so the higher you go the less interesting it becomes. After ten or fifteen minutes of this flying I rose up to a thousand metres and sailed up into the mountains. Went up a deep valley for a great number of miles. You can imagine the sight I had going up this valley at about 1000 metres with the snow-covered mountains rising up above me on all sides. I found a number of small towns, so on my way back I went down low and made a circle over each one, much to the pleasure of the inhabitants. When I got back to the foothills I inspected some of the numerous chateaux which are situated on the knolls overlooking the Pau river on one side and facing the Pyrenees on the other. Got a line on a good many—inspected about six. Tomorrow I go on 110 horse power Nieuport for “vol de groupe.”

Dec. 7—Was sick last night so laid off work this morning and made a visit to the doctor with Saxon. Felt well enough to go out to work this afternoon and had an hour and a half of vol de groupe “110.” Had a bum engine—two dirty spark plugs—but managed to get in one and one-half hours.

Dec. 8—Finished up with vol de groupe, with a one and one-half hours flight this morning. Flew over Lourdes this morning at about 100 metres. Lourdes is a village about 30 or 40 kilometres from here, that is reputed for its mystic shrine where thousands of people have

been cured of deformities. It is said one can visit a museum in which there are thousands of crutches left by the cripples cured at this shrine. There is a large church that looks quite attractive from the air—think it would be almost worth while to take a trip there to inspect the inside.

Tomorrow I go to the acrobatics piste to learn how to do a vrille, rendeversement, barrel-turn and vertical virage.

Dec. 9—Went to the acrobatic piste but only had time to do two tours in a 12 metre Nieuport. Couldn't see much difference between the "13" and "15" with the exception that the "13" lands a little faster. Just got into the machine to go up to do a vrille and rendeversement when an approaching rain storm caused all work to be stopped. Think a man would have a pretty slim chance at this acrobatic game if he didn't know just what he had to do before he went up. When I got out there this morning the monitor called me aside and told me how to do the movements. For a vrille, he said, you (1) cut your motor, (2) pull back on your elevator, (3) kick foot to one side and pull elevator stick back and to the same side. (4) When machine has lost 250 metres of height put all controls in middle and (5) put on engine. After that, he said, you will do five or six rendeversements, done like this: (1) pull elevator stick back half way, very quickly, (2) kick on foot (the side you want to make the rendeversement on) as far as it will go, (3) cut motor, (4) straighten your feet (5) pull elevator control rest of the way back. (6) put on engine and put elevator stick in normal position. After he had rattled thru this he then hurried on telling me what would happen if I did anything wrong, such as leaving my foot, in the rendeversement, at one side too long which would turn me over completely instead of on my back. After this brief explanation the monitor took me over to a machine and told me to go thru the movements. I went thru them two or three times, then he said that I could go up 1500 metres and try them. Sounds easy, as it really is, if you have thought about the movements for some days before you go to this piste, but if you depended upon the pointers the monitor gives you, you could very easily get number 3 movement of the 1st exercise in place of number 3 or 4 of the second. However, the beauty of it all is that, altho you may cut a rather weird figure, the chances are greatly in your favor of coming out upside up.

Rained this afternoon so we all stayed in the barracks and fought the war out by talking—or shouting. If it rains tomorrow there are liable to be some casualties.

Dec. 9—Rained all day so we had to suffer many conferences from which I, as well as most of the others, got very little. I got enough from one lecture on how to shoot the Boche to realize that I have a tremendous task ahead of me before having a “ghost of a chance” in hitting the side of a barn, to say nothing of hitting the vital spot of an enemy plane moving at a 100 to 170 kil. an hour. When you consider that you have to reckon the speed, distance and direction of the enemy plane you can see that it is almost necessary to get your barrel on the Boche’s head before pulling the trigger. Never shoot more than at a 100 yards and usually within 50 is what they tell us.



Dec. 11—This morning I did my acrobatics. If anyone had watched me carefully while waiting to go up they would have suspected me of being palsied. My knees, I fear, have black and blue spots on the inside. As soon as I got in the machine this slight attack of the “horrors” disappeared and I felt as comfortable as tho I were going up for a little pleasure jaunt. When I got up to 1500 metres I was somewhat disconcerted to see that a thick bank of clouds had come in under me and completely hid the ground—I say “disconcerted,” not because I had any fear of getting lost, but because I was completely cut off from the sight of the monitors and élèves watching me, and it is a big comfort to know that some one is watching you throw yourself into all sorts of stomach-turning somersaults and zig-zags. The two Frenchmen who went up with me decided that it was no use risking their necks and not get any credit for it, went down. I thought I would do a few things just for practice, then repeat them when the clouds disappeared. I did two vrilles, one to left and one to right. From the first day in Penguin, six months ago, I have heard of the vrille—how many men had been killed by getting into one. But, in spite of the fact that I dropped two to three hundred metres in this weird exercise, I experience very little sensation. To be sure, when I stopped them I was always thrown forward with such violence that I was not sure I was not going to continue my course right over the dash-board, but aside from that I felt quite secure. After the vrilles I did six or seven rendeversements. These give much more of a sensation. First you jerk the machine up on its nose; secondly you give your foot a violent jab which throws you on your back; thirdly you cut your motor and pull your elevator stick way back which puts you in normal position. At least, this is the way you have it from the monitor, but when you get up in the air you sort of push and jab and pull, then wait to see where you are—on your back, nose, tail or upside up. Finally a small opening in the clouds came between me and the class so I decided to “cut a beautiful figure” just for their pleasure. I got directly over the opening, then started a rendeversement. But I held my foot forward a moment too long and didn’t pull back soon enough, so turned over completely and fell off into a vrille. I felt pretty cheap in making such a showing, but found out later that the monitor said, “A, he is an ace, he does a tournau, goes into a vrille and comes out of it perfectly,”—there is no justice in this world. After that I did four or five vertical virages. These, altho the most interesting to look at, are by far the most difficult. They are done with full motor, and aside from being very hard to

regulate your position and keep the machine from slipping into a vrille, there is a very uncomfortable vibration of motor and wings. At this stage of my performance I felt that urgent call experienced by many ocean-travelers and, to paraphrase a nautical saying—I fed the fowls. Thinking I had done sufficient for one trip—I was up an hour and fifteen minutes—I came down. I expected to be roundly “bawled out” but to my surprise, the monitor said, “Trés bien, vous allez á Cazaux et, après, au front sur un appaiel monoplane.”

Dec. 12—Clouds and rain all day. Spent the morning jumping around out at the piste in an endeavor to keep warm. People say that this place is a winter resort, but I will be blamed if I can figure out what they come here for. I have been here for two weeks and seldom have been so cold. It has gotten to a stage where I have to dress up when I go to bed and undress when I get up. I haven’t left my shoes on yet but expect to make use of my fleece-lined flying boots before long.

Tonight our ranks are rather depleted. Some are spending the night in jail. Most of them were the last I ever expected to see there. They have always been the ones to get us out to roll-calls on time and in every other way have been promptness itself. However, a capotage at the wrong moment turned the trick and they will be among the missing for 12 nights. Buffum and Olcut were both so unfortunate as to have a motor panne while a long way from home—being far from the camp is strictly “defendu.”

Dec. 13—I had two hours today in “vol de combat.” This morning I spent about an hour taking pictures of a parachute which I took up to 1500 metres and threw out. This is the greatest sport I have had since I have been here. You throw your parachute over when you are going against the sun, then make a short vertical bank and peek down on it. You get the parachute in your sight and try to keep it there until you would shoot, if you had a gun—about 30 to 50 metres, coming down as you do with full motor. You can imagine how fast you tear past that parachute. I took four pictures. I haven’t seen my negatives yet, but the monitor told an American that I did very well. This afternoon I flew for an hour with three others in battle formation. We flew in a diamond formation, each man about 100 metres from the other and with the two side men 50 metres above the leader and the tail man (myself) 50 metres above the side men. It is very hard to keep the formation as the leader keeps twisting back and forth so as to prevent any sham Boche from sneaking up behind. For fifteen minutes Ely and I had a fierce fight—he claims that he had a “line” on me

three times, so I can consider three of my nine lives gone. We dove at each other, twisted around each other and tried to outclimb each other in an endeavor to get in an advantageous position.

Dec. 14—This morning Stanley and I went up with a parachute and practiced diving on it. This is even more fun than playing around it alone as you have to keep your eyes open for the other man. You take a dive at it, make a sharp virage and wait for him to take his plunge. When you see a man doing this from the ground it reminds you of a bird diving for an insect.

This afternoon I was a member of a patrol which was to meet an enemy patrol of four Americans and have a battle. Our patrol met at 800 metres over a chateau near the camp and flew up and down the river valley for an hour in an endeavor to find the enemy patrol. Our chief finally gave up and came down, with Stanley and me close behind. When we reached the hangars we found Whitmore, Buffum, Foster and Ely, the enemy patrol, waiting for us. It seems that Ely, the leader, had had motor trouble and came down before the rest of his patrol reached the meeting place. When the other three got up there they kept circling around following each other and waiting for someone to give the sign that everything was ready and lead off. But each one thought that one of the other two was Ely, the chief, so they flew in a circle for half an hour, then broke up for a joy ride of another half hour.

Tonight it is as cold as one might expect it to be at Duluth or some other northern city. Corsi has just gone out with the ax in search of fire wood. He is a man that won't let anything stop him in getting what he wants, so he may come back with the door of the pilotage or the propeller of the captain's machine—he has returned with a tree brace.

Dec. 15—This morning I had an hour of “vol de combat.” This afternoon another hour of the same thing. As the “plafond” (height of clouds) was very low, 700 metres, we didn't do much combat flying but spent our time flying by ourselves. I spent the two hours perfecting my vertical banks. I don't know how many I did, but when I came in this afternoon I felt as tho I had completely lost my “touch.” I did two as they should be done, but, try as hard as I could, I couldn't do any more without falling into a wing slip or a vrille. You are supposed to do these without loss of height, but I fell between 50 and 150 metres in nearly all. Heard today that Harry Foster and I are to leave for P. B. the day after tomorrow. Davis, Ely, Stanley, Buffum, Whitmore

and Corsi leave for Cazaux tomorrow. Sorry I didn't get in on that list as it may cause me to lose out on a Spad at P. B. Read in yesterday's N. Y. Herald that Walcott was killed a few days ago. He was at Avord with me, went thru there in two months and was considered an excellent flyer. Kenyon was cited in the school orders of the day for "sang froid" because of bringing his machine down from 1800 metres, two days ago, when on fire. He was deliberate enough to take out the altimeter and cushion (!) after landing. The machine burned to a crisp, but Kenyon was not in the least hurt.

Dec. 19—This is my birthday—22 years old, hard to believe that I have had 22 of them. I certainly never thought when I used to get up on birthdays and go down to breakfast and find a jackknife, a miniature railway, candy, a dollar under the plate from Uncle O., and many other things, that I would have my 22nd in France while learning how to fly in the French army. Wonder where I will be on my 23rd.

I am now at Cazaux, the French school for machine-gun training. I can consider myself very lucky to get here as there are only about 25 pilots come here a month—the rest of the 300 (?) are men that run the machine-gun in a bi-place or tri-place avion. As I have progressed in this French training and have gone from school to school I have experienced better training, food and living conditions. This school has a real business-like air about it. Since I have been here every hour has been taken up with lectures and gun practice. Six Americans who came from Pau at the same time I did, have been to the Range three times and shot rifles of most every caliber from a "22" to a "303" army rifle. We have also wasted a good many gun-shot cartridges in vain endeavors to hit clay pigeons. Besides these fire-arms, we have blazed away with machine-guns at targets some 500 metres out on the lake. But far better than all these, Buffum and I had the good fortune to shoot from a Farnum hydro-aeroplane. The pilot took us out over the lake while we sat up in the nacelle with a rifle and blazed at a string of buoys down in the water. This was about as much fun as I have ever had, and I think that after the war I will go hunting with one of these machines.

Dec. 27—Spent Christmas in Paris. Phil Davis and I invested our time and money in "eats," a very foolish thing to do when you consider what that money would buy if invested to more sensible purposes, but when you consider that you are in Paris, or any city seldom, and that your life is recorded in days, it is not so foolish—at least it is more excusable.



Pau, le 27 December, 1917.

ECOLE MILITAIRE D'AVIATION,
de Pau

DEAR SIS:

I received your two letters written some two months ago. Your letters are snappy but a trifle short. If you are going to be so brief, can't you make them oftener?

Since I wrote last I have spent a night and two days in Paris, also two nights on the train, and have had a few more hours in the air. It is funny how Paris attracts you, especially when you are away from it. It hardly seems sensible to ride two nights on a train, sitting up, to get there and back when you only have two days and a night there, but that is what five of us did. One thing about Paris that attracts me is the fact that you can meet about fifty per cent of the people you know in France, friends that have been at school with you and have since gone to the front. At the Chatam bar or on the boulevards you can always find a good portion of the Lafayette Escadrille in the Chatam, "all of them helping to save France." It is good sport talking to these fellows and listening to their "line."

The last couple of days I have been at "Chasses parachute" and "tie sur balloon." I told you how we do the former in a letter sent from Paris where we had to do the same thing. I have gotten so that I can change my direction by a "rendeversement" without losing more than 50 metres, which is about the correct amount to lose. I can also follow my successive position thruout the exercise. I have shot a thousand rounds at a "saucisse" (a "sausage" or observation balloon) and today put the last bullet of the day into it as it sank to the ground. We go up in the air 400 metres then dive at the balloon, start shooting at 800 metres, finish at 500. In this distance you can easily shoot 50 shots, and as we only have a hundred in our belts we have to come down after circling and shooting twice. The guns are Vickar machine guns, one mounted (fixed) on the front of the aeroplane, and are timed so as to shoot between the propeller blades. Sometimes the "timer" fails then you are likely to put a couple of holes thru the blade, which would not necessarily break it, but certainly would weaken it.

It is quite hard to hold the sights on the target as you have to move the entire machine to correct for each small *bump* you get. As it was to-day, a "15" Nieuport bounces around a good deal in the wind. First slap on one side then on the other sends your machine suddenly up, then lets you drop fifty or more metres, then tips you on one side, and then on the other, then goes thru these movements again with different variations. Usually you can let your machine ride these without bothering to correct, but sometimes you get one that sets you up on one ear and requires a counteracting movement on your part.

I certainly have a great Christmas coming to me. The family and all my relations, as well as some others, were certainly *royal* in sending me all this stuff. I hope to find it by the time I get to Plessis-Belleville, where all my Avord mail is being sent.

I received Dad's letter today containing three letters of recommendation. I worked it so that I didn't have to wait for those but I will hold them in case I want to "join" something else.

I am afraid that Mother is becoming unproportionately proud of her sons. I am not so sure about Joe who had a position to give up and valuable time, but I can't see that I have done anything of particular distinction. In spite of the fact that a lecturer said "the airmen are the bravest" it is a lot of "bunk." If it is braver to fly for two hours a day and expose your life for a few minutes then go to a good barrack and good food, than to stand in water-filled trenches under a barrage fire that hits almost every square foot and have a damp underground bunk and food to eat that "Chap" wouldn't eat, then "the flyers are the bravest." Bravery is as common as grass; it is about the most common thing over here. So I think you better tell Mother that she can be glad that she has two sons that are where they get decent food and a dry place to sleep, but shouldn't talk about their bravery or wave a two-starred flag indicating two men in the army. It should be taken for granted that if there are two in the family who could go, that they would.

I am sure glad to see that Joe has gotten into an officer's school at last. I hope that he never tries to do the same thing that I have, as I don't think he could make a go of it with his poor eyes.

Best love to all in the family, Carl.

Address Morgan-Harjes & Co., 31 Boulevard Haussman, Paris.



*Letter Written to Mr. Wallace. Published in
SPECTATOR, West High*

(We pass on to our readers a personal letter from Carl Chapman, written December 27th, 1917.)

I never realized what letters meant until I got over here. Any news from home is music to my ears and the stretches between letters—sometimes two weeks—are in life what the Dark Ages are in history. Tonight most of the ten Americans have letters—some boxes—from home, consequently the meal tonight was unusually animated. In a few days we will be back to our old topics, viz.: how rotten the food is—it is really first rate—; speculation as to how much food is left in Germany; what is going to happen in Russia and Italy; when the United States will get under way, and many other topics which we know nothing about and consequently get into red hot fights over.

You asked me to tell you something about the “sensations” of flying. As a source of sensations I think it is a fizzle—nothing to compare with a close game of golf or chess. I have found myself at times on the point of drowsiness when some few thousand metres in the air and have wished fervently I could go down. As for feeling thrilled because of height, it is surprising how safe you feel strapped in a 15-metre Nieuport and so high that you look like a speck from the ground. The highest that I have been is 5,000 metres (16,000 feet) and I got no particular sensation of height at all. The greatest sensation of height I have ever had was the first time I took a machine ten metres off the ground. When I felt myself pass into space and looked down at the ground, it looked as far from me as the earth must look to the angels.

However, there are some thrills especially for a new pilot. The first time I did acrobatics I had such a series of thrills that I experienced the sensation which comes to many ocean goers, and, to paraphrase a nautical term, I fed the birds. This incident happened at Pau down in the Pyrenees where I was learning how to do stunts that would win me a fortune at the Cedar Valley Fair. I was feeling so cocky before I went up that I told the monitor I would like to do all my acrobatics in one trip. Someone had told me this was the way to make a good impression and as his recommendation would help me to get a “Spad” I

thought it worth while. So I went up to 1500 metres and started. First I did two “vrilles”—this sends your nose down and whirls you around on your longitudinal axis, meanwhile dropping faster than the Singer Building elevator. After that I did what I was told to do but didn’t have the least idea just what I was doing.

There are some other thrills. For instance, if you can imagine a view from three or four thousand metres of a plain cut into small cultivated patches that make it look like a patch quilt, with small villages scattered here and there, with winding rivers cutting the plain, with mountains topped with snow in the distance—if you can imagine all this with the sun on it making the white villages stand out against the gray ground, making the rivers glisten so that you can see them for miles, so far in fact that they seem to flow right up to heaven, and giving the snow-capped mountains an incomparable splendor; if you can imagine this you can see what I used to see while flying at Pau every day. Sometimes you will get some very striking views while flying above the clouds—you may have seen such an effect while up in the mountains. But for real thrills, the way to get them is to fly near the ground. There you get some idea of your speed which you lose at any height. While at Pau I used to sail up the mountain valleys and come down low over each village and have a great time watching the people run out of their houses to see what was making all the racket up above.

Things look rather bad now. It looks like it is goodbye to the United States for some months yet. But let Russia and Italy fall out, the United States is a bigger load than both together and although our newly-made officers may cost us 200,000 men, we will learn, and when we learn we will be better than the Canadian troops which have the “rep” of being the best on the English front.

There will be a lot of sorrow in the States before this is over. Here everyone has lost a father or a husband or a son or all. Everyone is in black. But I must say the people keep their sorrow well hidden. The people at home will have a harder time as we are too far away to have a chance to come home on furlough. I met a Canadian officer who came here two years ago—thought he was getting in on the last few days of the war. He has never been back nor can he go back until the end. You can tell some of the soldiers who are in a hurry to come across to take their time as the war looks like a permanent institution.

Sincerely yours,

CARL CHAPMAN.



December 28, 1917.

DEAR MOTHER:

I just received your letter dated November 28th. Can't understand why you are still addressing me at Avord as I wrote you a good while before I left there to address me c-o Morgan-Harjes & Co., 31 Boulevard Haussmann, Paris. I will be through here within ten days; then to P. B. for two weeks, then to the front. Thought it better to have a central address until I get settled. You certainly are the busy woman—think you are doing a day laborer's work compared to me—I am doing much more work than I ever did at Avord: have to be out at the field eight hours a day. Flew in the snow today; pretty rough.

Will be in Bordeaux for New Year's.

Love, CARL.



Hotel De France, Et Grand Hotel

Bordeaux, Jan. 3, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

Since I wrote you last I have been to Bordeaux for a two-day New Year permission. I went with "Phil" Davis, the greatest connoisseur in "eats" I have ever met, "Herm" Whitmore and "Tom" Buffum. We made the most of our time in eating, in sleeping and in bathing. The city was crowded with people, principally American soldiers, so we had to go to the lavish expense of paying 10 francs "per" for our rooms. This is real lavishness when one is in France. Five francs will usually buy a very comfortable room, with a large bath. Where we specialize in bath rooms these people specialize in beds so no matter if there are no rugs, or heated radiators or electric lights, a bed is in the center and one on the foreshore of the room. A wash basin, chairs, rugs, curtains and wall paper, and lots of vacant space completed the contents of the room. I don't know as you will care about having me tell you about this room, but I want to show you that although we live in "the great open country" of the U. S. where you can ride miles

without seeing a living creature, a country that gives 300 acres of land to any individual that has the grit to sit on it for three years, a country that could put all of France inside one of her states, that some kinds of space are a lot cheaper here than in the U. S. My bath cost me two and one-half francs, quite “cher,” but I think the hotel must have lost on the deal as I am sure they had to call a plumber to clean out the pipes after I finished.

We had New Year’s dinner at the Chapeau Range, a small restaurant near the hotel. We started out with a dozen oysters apiece. After that I had raie which I thot was a small fish, but turned out to be shark’s fin. Next we all had potatoes, then brussel sprouts, then nuts, fruit and coffee. We had some “ordinaire” white wine with the dinner and the dinner came to about 12 francs apiece.

I received my first Christmas box yesterday. It was the one containing the cigars from Joe, socks from Sis, tie from Dad, cigarettes from Jim and Grandmother, and tassel cap, helmet, sweater and Spectator from you. I certainly was glad to get it and thank all the family for the things. The tassel cap is a wonder, it is not only good looking but warm and large enough to wrap from neck to feet. I can’t figure out the significance of Dad’s black tie. I suppose that it is a “preparedness” gift. The cigarettes were greatly appreciated, especially as cigarettes are becoming harder and harder to get. When in Bordeaux the cigar stores had lines of soldiers at their doors waiting for their turns to buy *one* package. A good many stores didn’t have any. On the strength of Dad’s and Mr. Condict’s letters saying that they had sent me some, I gave a box to each of the Frenchmen in my barracks.

Three other Americans and I lost one day on our New Year permission because of being detailed to patrol duty over the Russian camp near here. They are all being sent to divers parts of the country much to their objections, and rumors had it that they were going to resist. During the hours of our patrol a fog settled on the ground so that we missed both the pleasure of flying at low altitude over the camp and a day of our permission. If we had flown and they had acted unbecomingly I don’t know if any of us would have had the nerve (the kind that makes a good soldier) to shoot into them.

Suppose that you are with Joe at San Antonio. It will be great for you both. I hope that Joe passes O. K. in all his work. He deserves a Major rank for all the work he has done. Will leave here the 10th for Plessis-Belleville.

Love to all, CARL.



Jan. 17th, 1918.

DEAR SIS:

Since I wrote you last I have moved from Cazaux to this place of Plessis-Belleville. The best that I can say for it is that it is just a little muddier, damper and gloomier than Avord. I arrived here last night. Such a night I never hope to be out in again. It rained and blew so hard that it took the roof off one the barracks, fortunately empty, and made the camp one grand mudhole. Buffum, Whitmore, Davis, Ely, Stanley, three French lieutenants and I reached here after being transported (this is a sub-camp of P B) from Plessis-Belleville 30 kilometers across country in a little two-cart automobile with the rear cart full of baggage and myself sleeping on top of it. It took us three hours to make the trip so that we not only had rain and mud to cheer us up, but darkness too. We waded around in the mud for some time before we could find a place to sleep, but finally found a barrack, dry and warm.

When we went to draw our "effects chaudes"—blankets and mattress, we found that there was a shortage, consequently we only got two small blankets for each one and no mattress. Some of the fellows got a mattress from some of the Frenchmen that had two and had a couple of blankets of their own, so they passed a comfortable night, but I couldn't find a Frenchman that had two until this morning, and my duffle bag has not come yet from Cazaux so I slept in my fur combination with one blanket as a pillow and the other between myself and the board bed. As the wind blew so hard, I didn't know but what the roof might lift any moment so didn't have much thought about the hard mattress. "Mess" is served in the loft of an old barn, but in spite of the fact that you have to keep cleaning your plate of the dirt falling from the ceiling, the grub, bread, soup, stew, and potatoes taste good enough.

We are getting up into the war zone—in fact we are in it and we can say that we are "at the front," and the time for service stripes began when we came here. Today some of us took a walk out into the country and saw a few signs of the Boche invasion of this country when they advanced on Paris in '14. Just outside of Nerey there are a number of graves marked with crosses on which are written something like this: "Seven British Soldiers, names unknown, killed in action September 1st, 1914." There are a few houses in ruins, but not

many as the Boche must have had to leave in a very big hurry after the French broke their line on September 9th.

I have received two more packages, one from Mrs. Cole and another filled with dates, chocolate bars, boxed ginger snaps, home-made candy, which we are eating right now, nabiscos and other good things. There was no name or card on this last box so I don't know who it was from. It was dandy, especially the chocolate bars and cookies, and I would like to find out who sent it.

When in Paris I found out that we won't be taken over by the American Army for two or three months yet, so I tried to get in the Navy, but they are not taking any more men. The aviation section is all tangled up and when it will get out I don't know. I will probably fight as a French soldier for the rest of the war.

I have to be less free with my information now that I am getting somewhere near the front. Don't take it into your head to come over here, as you would become disgusted with the whole affair, besides being of less value than you are while doing all the Red Cross work that you are.

Tell Mother not to worry about not hearing from me in case of accident: every place one goes here, he has to give his life history, address and whom to notify in case of accident.

I hope that you don't get married until after the war. Can't understand why any girl wants to marry a man who is going to the war the next day.

With love to all the family, CARL.

* * *

Ecole Militaire D'Aviation
de Pau

Pau, le 21 January, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

I just received your letter of Dec. 23, and yesterday received your paper clipping showing Joe among the new officers. I sure am glad that Joe has finally been commissioned, especially as a first Lieutenant. He has got the goods all right and should rise rapidly. When

once he has his recommendation (I understand that he has only been recommended) turned to a real commission he can be assured forever of getting good food and good living conditions. He will never be up against the proposition that we are here, no water to wash with except what we carry in a can from the village, only two small blankets to put over you and a thin straw mattress to put between you and a board bunk, and no place to go to write and kill the time during the rainy days. Our recommendations have just been sent to Washington and I don't expect that we will actually be transferred for another two months. I don't mind waiting; we will have a chance to go to the front with a French escadrille, but the uncertainty of the whole proposition is rather disconcerting. This place is easily the worst that I have been in, but expect to leave here in a few days for ----- (am out at a sub-camp of P-B) which is not much better, but will be a change. I will be at P-B for a couple of weeks before being assigned to an escadrille.

This place is only a "grouping" station where all pilots come as the final station of their training. When a pilot comes here he supposedly knows how to fly, but from the number of accidents on our small piste, one wonders if a lot of the men are not taking their virgin flight. In the last two days one man has been killed, one slightly injured and nine machines smashed.

The Americans, seven, all got thru in fine shape, principally due to the fact that we have had from 70 to 80 hours in the air to the 40 or 50 hours of the French who have been breveted on Farmans and have not gone to Cazaux.

Buffum, Stanly, Corsi and I walked to -----, 10 kilometers, yesterday afternoon (it rained so we had no work) and had a good meal. We ate in a little cafe with five Canadians. The "Canucks" are all fine fellows and like the Americans better than they do any other crowd over here. This is partly due to the fact that there are a lot of Americans in the Canadian army, and partly to the fact that the Canadians and Americans are more alike than any others of the Allies, and can get along much better together. Get Americans and Canadians together and they will curse out every other army over here, and each praise the fine army and qualities of the other.

I am enclosing a slip that was dropped from an aeroplane over Paris. It was an advertisement of the last loan. \$2,000,000,000 was raised which shows that this country has a lot of fight left. Your ac-

count of crowds, hotels, automobiles and banquets sounds good. Wish I was there for a short time.

Love to all, CARL.

P. S.—We had soup, beef stew, potatoes, lettuce salad, a turkey leg, jam, cheese, butter, bread and coffee, at Cripy last night for 5 francs.

* * *

Jan. 27th, 1918.

DEAR DAD:

I just received your letter dated Jan. 5th, and within the last week, one from Mother dated Dec. 2nd, and 12th. As you can see there is no regularity in the receipt of your letters. You are evidently not receiving all my letters. I write, roughly, about three letters every two weeks. If there is a long lapse without any, you should receive a bunch together. There was a period at the time I wrote that postal from Menton, which by the way is just across the French border in Italy, there was a period of about ten days that I only wrote one letter, but that is the only time that I have not written at least once a week.

I have received packages this last week from Mrs. Cole, from Mrs. Nauman, and one with chocolate bars, nabiscos and cookies in it, but with no name on or in it. Chocolate bars make a fine box as they are very good to eat in the morning with a piece of bread, as you know we get nothing to eat until 11:00.

You must be having a lonesome time at home alone. I think this war is a lot harder on you people that have to stay at home and worry, than it is on us over here. Our family is scattered to the winds, I wonder when we will have our next reunion.

Yesterday I had one ride on a Moran and three on a Spad. The Moran is a monoplane, drives a good deal like a Bleriot and feels like an egg-shell when in the air. It is no good for the front—at least this type—because it can't climb fast, pique fast, or do acrobatics. The Spad is by far the best machine I have ever ridden in. When I get one of these at the front it will be my aviation high-water mark. (I would like to tell you more about these machines but am afraid that the letter would be censored if I did. I had one letter, I sent to Marian, returned to me because of a "military indiscretion.")

The Americans from our bunch have gotten six Boche machines, at the front, so far this month. This is a good record and boosts our rather fallen reputation—due to *misconduct* on the part of some of the gang. The rumor is that one American has been brought down, but it has not been officially reported.

I have picked up another nest of bugs and have to start the Avord fight over again. Think I got them from the blankets at Cazaux. I am going to move into a farm house, tomorrow, where I can get a room with *water* for 30c a day. I haven't had a bath since I left Paris, which hinders me in my fight against the pesky bugs.

We are having very mild weather. Lots of mist and rain, but moderate temperature. We can all be thankful for this as otherwise we would be stiff and stark by this time with only two blankets to cover us.

Love to all the family, CARL.

P. S.—Will write all the people that sent me packages but if you see any of them tell them that I certainly appreciate their trouble and thoughtfulness.

* * *

Jan. 31st, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

I have just received your letter dated Dec. 31st, just a month ago. Uncle Joe writes me that Joe has left S. A. so I expect that you will be packing up and moving to his new station, or perhaps home.

I have returned to Plessis-Belleville from Cerenne and have found this place better, but even here we have to wash between seven and eight and ten and eleven, or go without. A cold night freezes up the "plumbing system" and then we have to take a dry wash. Fortunately we have not had many cold nights. In order to insure a face wash and a little sleep, I have gotten a room for 1 f. 50 a day at a farm house not far from the camp.

Last night for the first time, I came in touch with this war. I had been to bed for an hour when I was wakened by a heavy, it seemed heavy to me, cannonading just outside my window. I jumped up and looked out. It was a clear night; a small cannon just at the end of the house was firing full tilt. All down the road I could see flashes and a moment later could hear the explosion of the guns, and a fraction of a second later that of the shells. Across the sky in a line, were bright

“fuses” or star-shells illuminating the entire country. I stood at the window for a number of minutes before I could figure out what was up, but then I heard the low hum of a big motor engine right over my head. The Boche were actually making the raid on Paris that the papers had been foretelling for a week.

I got dressed and went out in the road. The first machine passed over. Soon two (I should judge it was two by the sound of the motors) more came and passed. A moment later another two. All the time the guns were blazing away as though the entire Boche army was in front of them. Twenty minutes after the first machine passed one returned. They all (I don't think one was stopped) followed within a few minutes and passed on to the front. It was rather weird to hear all the guns fire for a couple of rounds apiece, then in the interim, to hear those motors still buzzing on up there as tho nothing on earth could stop them. We heard them pass. In twenty minutes they were back. In that time they had unloaded their bombs and killed perhaps thirty or forty people. After I had gotten dressed I called Brown, another American that sleeps here. He woke up just as the gun next to the house was firing. He thought they were Boche bombs and that they were placing one about every twenty yards down the road. He got all tangled up in his clothes in his haste to get dressed.

I have your list of the people that sent me packages and will write to all of them. There is a large package at the Aviation Headquarters sent from Avord for me.

Love to all, CARL.

* * *

February 1, 1918.

DEAR UNCLE OLIVER:

I had a letter yesterday from our Aviation headquarters saying that I had a couple of packages there for me so I left an American to impersonate me at Plessis-Belleville and I ran in here to Paris this morning to get my packages and any others for the fellows out there. I found yours and one from Aunt May and Edith. Mother wrote me about two months ago that this was coming, but aside from the fact that it takes a package two months to get over here, it has been following me from Avord to the various schools I have been to since. I am ever so much obliged for it. I have been waiting for this fountain pen

ever since Mother told me you were sending one. The smokes came in time to replenish my almost depleted supply. Tell Aunt Dorothy the cake looks and smells very good and the gang and I will have to have a special party for a “leader” to the cake.

Two nights ago the Boche attacked Paris, and one group flew directly over Plessis-Belleville. I was awakened by the anti-aircraft guns, one of which was right outside my window and for a moment I thought the Boche had broken through and were coming right down the road. I see by the paper that they got one of the Boche. Can’t say that I would care about going up at night with forty excited Frenchmen to attack a Boche as I think your chances would be better for being brought down by one of your own planes than the Boche. It is hard enough to distinguish a plane in daylight.

Many thanks for the package.

With love to yourself and Aunt Dorothy,

CARL.



Feb. 8th, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

Since I wrote you last I have been moved to a “tir ærien” near Plessis-Belleville for more machine gun work. The school is a farce and why I have been sent here just after coming from Cazaux where I have had all that I have had here, is beyond me, just a case of French inefficiency. Although the place is a “tir ærien” (air shooting) I have not been off the ground yet, nor will I ever be here, as I leave tomorrow for Plessis. I have spent four days going thru a repetition of some of the things I learned at Cazaux. There are all kinds of Frenchmen that did not have an opportunity to go to Cazaux that would have been glad to have the opportunity to come here to learn a little more, and to “kill” a little more time and, incidentally to keep away from the front a little longer.

But instead of picking those men we, myself, and three others Americans in the same position who have had all this work and are anxious to get to the front were chosen. If ever a man had a chance to exercise patience, it is in French aviation, and especially an American in our position. We have been nine months doing what could be done in five. We have been mixed so completely by French “red tape” that

we have lost half of the 2 f. 40 per day that we earn and cannot get our pilots insignia, and it gives one an undressed feeling to go around with no insignia except the wings on the collar. We have been held so long that we will only get a 2nd lieutenancy when, if he had sent in our applications when we made them we would have gotten 1st; and we are not sure just when we will be taken over as 2nd lieutenants. The French don't exert themselves any to favor us, because we are going to be taken over by the Americans; the Americans are in no hurry to take us over because we are getting a better training than they could give us, consequently we are "rooked" on both sides.

I can't tell you when I will be sent to the front. It may be tomorrow, it may be two weeks from now, I only hope it is *soon*, and I get a "Spad," but to get out of *school* I would drive a Bleriot, if necessary.

Since coming to Plessis, I have had five hours on the Spad. It is a beautiful machine, faster, more reliable, stronger and easier to handle than the Nieuport. A few days before I came here, I did my first loop, in one of these machines. Although I have done everything else that is done in acrobatics, we were never told to do a plain loop. So when up in a Spad one day I thought I would try the trick that used to keep us all gaping at the County Fair. I did three and I assure you, they are very simple and by no means worth the money that we used to pay to see them done. Although one has to be careful with the school machine, as they are subject to very hard treatment, whenever I get a machine that looks like it would stand more than the ordinary strain I make it a point to do a few acrobatics before coming down in order to get the practice in maneuvering which is essential for a good flyer. Acrobatics, in spite of what the magazines say, are never used in the aerial combat, now at least, but for practice in handling a machine.

I wish that I had a little of Joe's work to do. War would be a pleasant diversion and all that they say about it in the story books and songs if all the fighting was concentrated into six months or a year, but when one has to *wait and wait* and splash about in the mud from one day to the next it becomes hell, and with no reservation on Billy Sunday's descriptions and I begin to see there is a lot of truth in the popular verse:

"It's not the Huns,
It's not the guns,
But the mud, the *mud*, the *mud*!"

I begin to see that learning how to be a soldier is not a matter of learning how to shoot a gun, but of how to live in very adverse condi-

tions. I think that is the reason that experts say that it takes three years to make a soldier.

I certainly am sorry to hear that Joe lost out on his 1st Lieutenancy commission, but I think he will go up soon, and before long be a captain. Wish I could get home to see you all for awhile. Would like to visit an American aviation camp and see how it is run in comparison with a French one.

Love to all, CARL.

P. S.—In the last letter I told Dad that I had received packages from both Uncle Oliver and Aunt May and Edith. I think there are probably some more for me in Paris.

* * *

Feb. 13th, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

I just received your letters dated Dec. 13th, and so I hope that you have received a batch of my letters by this time; I don't believe the censor suddenly began to confiscate them, but think that they have been held up in the round-about mail route. I did have a letter, I wrote to Marion, returned to me twice, because once I had put my name on the outside, and again because I had enclosed a letter of Joe's which had diagrams in it, and diagrams, whether of a house or an aeroplane looks all the same to the French censor.

One of the fellows just returned from Paris, tells me that my commission as a 2nd lieutenant is waiting for me at Paris, and that I will be released from the French army and called to Paris within a few days. This sounds good, but I won't believe it, until I actually sign my name to my commission. If this is true I will probably be called to Paris before I leave here for the front. In that case I will not go to the front for a couple of months more as all of us have to go to Issoudun for some time to learn "military etiquette."

It is warm as spring here, has been all winter. It is a pity that they cannot get things straightened out in the States so that you can get the coal that is standing in the cars.

Uncle Oliver's tobacco and Aunt May's and Edith's tobacco and cigarettes have saved the day for myself and a lot of the gang. I am the only one that has had any "smokes" for the last five days.

With love, CARL.

* * *

WAR DEPARTMENT
Office of the Chief Signal Officer
Washington.

Air Division (Personnel) February 6, 1918.

From: Office Chief Signal Officer.

To: Second Lieutenant Charles Wesley Chapman, Jr.,

Aviation Section, Signal Officers' Reserve Corps,

American Expeditionary Forces.

Subject: Commission.

1. It is understood that you have been advised by cable of the issuance of your commission as Second Lieutenant, Aviation Section, Signal Officers' Reserve Corps, date of rank January 26, 1918. As the engraved commission is bulky and subject to injury in the mails, it is being held until called for in the office of the Chief Signal Officer, War Department, Washington, D. C.

2. It is further understood that you have accepted the commission, forwarded the oath of office to the Adjutant General of the Army, and been placed on active duty.

By direction of the Chief Signal Officer:

J. A. Ripley,
Captain, Signal Reserve Corps, A. S.

* * *

Feb. 21, 1918.

DEAR DAD:

Just a word between trains. I have finally passed into the American Army, "comme deuxieme (2nd) lieutenant." I am now at the General Headquarters but leave for Issoudun tonight at 8:00 where I will do—I don't know what; probably build railroads just by way of initiation, but in spite of my many doubts about the sterling qualities of our army, the first impression was very favorable. Listen here what I

had to do to get my commission. Three papers were set before me to sign. After that I had to take the oath. I was then told to wait for my orders. These were handed to me in five minutes. That was all. Why it took more signing and countersigning in the French Army to get my pay of 2 f. 40 per day. I only hope this direct way keeps up.

But in spite of the red tape, the poor food, the hard cots (and bed-bugs) the muddy camps, the lack of water, and the red “pinard” I can’t say that I will rejoice in taking off this blue uniform for the last time, and it is not only because there is a lot more wear in it, but also because I have had a good time and met a lot of good fellows while being in it. We are all scattering now; some are going on with the French and some with the Americans. Probably be a lot I will never see again. It sure will be great when we have a reunion after the war. I haven’t had my letters for a week. You can address me after this as Lieutenant C. W. Chapman (looks pretty good), c-o M.-H. & Co., and I will have it forwarded.

With love, CARL.

* * *

March 2nd, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

I am writing this from my “room,”—the room given to me as fitting for an instructor. For a table I am using an inverted wash basin, and am toasting my feet before *my* stove, and enjoying myself with the aid of a pipeful of “Prince Albert.” My room is about fifteen feet long and ten feet wide. I have in it, besides the stove and wash basin, two cots, a nice summer lawn chair, my trunk, a pail of hot water and a box full of coal. This is all—no wall paper, piano, excess furniture, pictures or any other adornments of a civilized home. However, I am very comfortable and can hope for no better quarters during the war. There is another favorable feature of my room—its situation, which is right next to the mess hall, so that all I have to do is to put on my slippers, take ten paces and I can eat. I said that I had two cots—that is because Bill Loomis was here with me but has since been called back to the main field preparatory for his leaving for the front. We were both sent here as instructors, he for the acrobatic field—I for the spi-

ral class. Since being here, we have had only two days of flying weather so that I have had practically nothing to do.

The mess is all that one could hope for. This noon we had potatoes and gravy, chops, carrots, white bread, butter, coffee and sugar and cream, baked apples, and cake. This was a little better than usual but who could ask for a better mess. It is almost too good, and I believe the French had a deeper reason for feeding us as they did than I thought, namely, to make us hungry vicious fighting men. Now I feel like doing nothing but smoking my pipe, reading, sleeping and being contented.

When I leave here I can't say—it may be tomorrow or it may be a month. Haven't had a word from home for three weeks. Write me c-o M. H. & Co.

CARL.

P. S.—On re-reading this letter I found that I had not told you very much, and as it is the first letter I have written since I have been here I suppose you are rather anxious about my new surroundings. I wrote Dad from the American Headquarters where I got my commission. From there I came to this place, which I visited last summer when doing my brevet work for active duty. I found the camp very much larger and, thank heaven, less muddy, than when here before. We were given bunks at the main camp but were not assigned to any duty until two days later. As I have said, Bill Loomis and I were sent out to this field, we had to live here as assistant instructors, but on account of bad weather have done practically nothing. I hope to be sent out to the front soon, perhaps tomorrow. I refused to work a job of flying machines from the central depot to different schools because it meant being back of the lines for another couple of months.

When on my way to the American Headquarters I stopped in Paris for one day. While there I found that the letter-of-credit Dad sent me last fall was not at the Farmers Loan & Trust Co., where he said it would be, nor at M. H. & Co. I had had no need for it up to that time so had never tried to draw on it before. I wired him about it but haven't heard from him yet. Suppose I made some mistake somewhere. I had 250 francs left at M. H. & Co. so was not at all embarrassed. Will have to have some money tho as I find that one has to pay for everything in this army and as I don't draw any real pay until the last of this month, I will have to draw on Dad once more, I hope the last.



Paris, March 15, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

I expect that you have been wondering where I have been located since I wrote you last from Issoudun. Well, I left the next day after I wrote you from that place for the front with the 1st Pursuit Unit. You can believe me I was glad to start after being in school for ten months, one has had quite enough and is very willing to go to the front where he is free from roll-calls and other petty discipline. We arrived at our camp (near Rheims) after two days traveling and found our barracks all ready for us but no beds, blankets or other equipment for us men that have transferred from the French army. We were still in our French uniforms and as we had bad beds and blankets furnished us while with the French and had had no time to buy things before our transfer we were stranded there with no equipment. However, there were six men with beds there that were in Paris so we slept in their bunks.

We had no machines there so in four days we were sent back to Paris to get them and fly them out to the front. We have been here eight days now waiting for them and can't tell how much longer we will have to wait. We are flying a brand new type of a machine that has some good points and some bad. It is a type 28 Nieuport, with a monosoupape rotary motor. It goes faster than a Spad, can manoeuvre better, but unfortunately is not as strong. I don't know how reliable the motor is, but think it will be perfectly capable of taking me over to Germany, then stopping and leaving me to rest awhile in the hands of the Boche.

I am very fortunate in getting into this unit as it is, with the exception of one, the first chasse unit at the front. We have a great bunch of fellows with us and good commanders. Major Huffer is our flight commander. He has been with the French for three years so knows the game well. Major Lufbury is going to be with us to take us over the lines for the first three times. He is the "Ace" of the old Lafayette Escadrille, has 16 official Boche, is a fine fellow and is willing to tell you all he can. So you can see we have two of the very small number of Americans with us that have actually done anything in aviation at the front. We had a Captain Miller with us, who was killed the day after I left the front. He was over-confident, thought there was no

Boche out there that could touch him. He went out with Major Johnson, saw a biplane Boche, attacked it from above instead of below and was brought down. Lufbury thinks the Americans are getting too much training, consequently are too confident and rash. Says he will have to hold them back or he won't have an escadrille left.

I am anxious to leave this place and get back to the front where it is safe and quiet. The first night I got here the Boche came over. Two British officers, another American and myself were sitting in the Bar of an English theatre when the siren was sounded. Three English girls came up and asked us to see them home, we were so foolish as to decide to start right out. We went outside, could hear the guns blazing away and machines passing back and forth above us. It was pitch dark. The only light was from the star-shells and breaking shells. We had only walked about a hundred yards when we felt the ground tremble and heard a dull rumble. The girl I was with said it was a bomb but I didn't think it made enough noise for one. We had only taken a few more steps when there came a terrible explosion. We dove into a hotel just in time to escape falling glass that came from every window near. The hotel was in great confusion. People came running out of their rooms, throwing quilts around their night-gowns. The only lights came from candles placed at intervals around the halls. We stayed there an hour and then started for home.

By that time the raid was over and the sirens sounded O. K. again. Two days later just after noon I was walking towards Morgan Harjes when there came a terrible explosion. The pane of the window right at my side came crashing down all around my feet—thank goodness it wasn't my head. The little goods-stands along the curbing were all knocked flat. I was standing right next to an "Abri" and began shoving women, old men, kids and everything that came along down this place. One woman insisted on picking up her stand and I had to drag her down.

I was just going down when I saw a pocket-book lying on the curbing so I made a dash for it, just like the hero that saves the child from the burning house; found the owner downstairs. A few minutes there was another shock. After ten or fifteen minutes I came up out of the Abri and found everybody walking around laughing and joking and trying to see the Boche; we found out later that it was a munition explosion.

I found my letter-of-credit at the Farmers Loan & Trust Co. They had misplaced it and had accidentally run across it later.

I haven't had a letter for a month and a half, as they have been following me around from place to place. I hope to find it all when I go back to the front.

With love to all, CARL.

* * *

Paris, France, March 19, 1918.

DEAR DAD:

When I came back from Paris last night I found six letters from Mother and three from you—the first I have had for a month and a half. From Mother's letters I make out that you are not receiving but part of my letters. For the last month I have been a little slack but before that I was sending them home about three a week. They may have come in after Mother wrote. Don't worry if you don't hear from me, as if anything happens you will hear, so "no news is good news."

I got back here last night after being detailed to bring out the baggage on the train. I will either have to return for my machine or some one will have to go in for it. Here is hoping that I am sent, not because I want to go back to Paris, but because I would like to drive the beast out. It is a beautiful ride following the Marne right out.

The quarters here are very comfortable. We have rooms about 15 feet long and eight wide in which there are two men. In the halls there are three stoves which keep us warm enough for this mild weather. There is a separate building for the squadron office and mess. The mess is great but unfortunately costs 10 francs a day. This is necessary because everything is just being started. We can't draw on the quartermaster so are forced to pay civilian prices. We also had to give 50 francs to buy dishes and other necessary utensils. While this is pretty heavy on the four 2nd lieutenants in the squadron we have to put up with it and pray that we will get promotion if only that we may pay for our mess.

I have just received three more letters from Mother. It is a pity that all the Americans couldn't have come over here for the winter. With the exception of December it has been very mild all winter.

While in Paris this last time everyone was out promenading on the boulevards. Paris is certainly a wonderful sight now. Soldiers from all over the world gathered there, dressed in their best. The French with

their gold braid, the English with their brass buttons, spurs and walking canes, the Italians with their high gray hats, the Australians with their sombreros pinned up on one side, the Anzacs with the shoulder mail, the Indians with their high cloth head dresses, the Americans in their drab costume, and many others all gathered there and strutting up and down the streets as tho in a style show.

Tell Mother not to count on Joe ever running across me over here. I have only seen about two men that I knew back in the States. Phil Davis has a cousin here that he has been trying to meet for four months but has failed so far. He might be stationed at one end of France and I at the other. However, when he sails be sure and give him my address (M. H. & Co.) He better take the same as it is much quicker to get it through them than by the U. S. army routes, and perhaps I can manage to "break down" somewhere in his vicinity.

Who would have thought a year ago that Uncle Oliver would be a husband and father by now.

When in Paris last week I had to buy a complete outfit from blankets to wash basin. Never was in an army before that didn't at least furnish something gratis. You even have to buy a bed.

This army of ours certainly is strict. When walking down a Paris street with a fellow, a private on police duty stopped us and asked Cunningham to take his hand out of his pockets: that is going pretty far. Every corner in Paris has a military policeman on it, dangling his "billy" as tho he expected to be assaulted by everyone that passed. No other army has them, and I think it is a disgrace to ours that they are kept there. The French think we are a bunch of thugs.

I have received three packages lately, from Uncle Joe, Neva Lang and Mr. Conduct. I have a supply of cigarettes that will last me for a couple of weeks, but the trouble is that whenever one pulls out his case it doesn't mean one, but enough for the crowd.

Tell Joe that he better get off that job as supply officer or he will be stuck in some school for the rest of his life. He might get out to a squadron at the front *in time*, but it may be a year or so yet. *Things are slow at home*. A year at war and no American machines on this side of the water. Try sending me a package of Murads addressed, "2nd Lieut. C. W. Chapman, A. S. S. C., U. S. R. Lines of Communication, France." I am anxious to see how that works.

I have taken out \$10,000 of insurance and had it divided equally between Mother, Marian, Jim and Joe. I owe it all and more to you, but thot that money to them is money to you. Haven't taken out any

Liberty Bonds yet, as I have spent two months salary on equipment. You need to be a captain, drawing flying pay (which we don't get) to be able to live in this army.

Rainy and cold today. Takes all the pep and interest out of war. Address me "M. H. & Co., Paris." CARL.



POST CARD

March 28, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

Just a note to let you know that I am all right. This afternoon we had a test flight for all our escadrille. First we had to go up and do some acrobatics. Later we flew in group formations. We are getting our machines at last and hope to be doing active work soon. Phil Davis and I are for the present assigned to the same machine. I don't know whether we will have to go over the lines flying the same machine or not. If so, it won't be for long. Great deal of activity north of here. CARL.



March 31, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

We are moving—it is a shame because we have sort of had the idea that we were to stay here for the duration of the war (we will know better from now on), and have fixed up our rooms and quarters on a rather elaborate basis. By "elaborate" I mean that we burned the walls of our dining room, put up my pictures, flags, had a sign put over the door "Officers Mess, 94th Aero Squadron,"—in my own room I had gone to the trouble and it was a lot because I have not done much carpentering, of constructing a workstand. We had all settled down in our new quarters with a great deal of satisfaction, just like a man who had built his own house would sit down the first night it was finished with a pretty contented feeling. Well we had just settled down when the order came to clear out; so we had to tear all our fur-

nishing out (those that could be taken), and pack up. I am now sitting on my bed, we have had to keep these because we may not be able to fly due to bad weather for a couple of days, amid a confusion that reminds me of moving to Sans Souci.

If I had thought I could have told that we would move about now. There are two reasons, (1) pay-day is almost here. (2) I have just taken my laundry over to an adjoining village at Issoudun. I moved the day before pay was issued; now here it is again the day before pay and I am moving. As for laundry, I have a bag of laundry in almost every corner of France. If collected it would almost clothe a company. It looks like these two days, laundry day and pay day were sure omens.

Last night we had a regal party—Easter dinner put ahead one day. We had (1) a Cordial, (2) Turkey, (3) potatoes, stuffing and gravy, (4) Salad, (5) Cake and Pineapple. There was also Champagne. The table was covered with red, white and blue paper, (not very good looking but patriotic), with carnations and dahlias, (not sure about the dahlias but they were some yellow golden rod-like flower). The French Captain was invited, also all the American Majors in the camp,—there are enough to run an army. A few weeks ago we had another special feast—the menu is enclosed. You can see we live well.

I think this move will be unfavorable—at least there will be a lot of military police there to call you for every move. Love, CARL.

P. S.—Like to be home to see the new spring hats; what kind is yours?

* * *

POST CARD

April 6, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

You say you expect me to bring down “many Boche.” Afraid you are too confident in the abilities of your son. There are very, very few men here that have brought down many Boche, and a great, great many that have brought down none. Don’t forget, the Boche have had three years of experience behind them and are using planes that are as good, if not better, than ours. If I get one I will be doing well. I am afraid the people in the States think the Boche fall like raindrops—probably get this idea thru reading of “Aces” only.

Have just gotten settled; we are going to move—again. I won't regret as this place is sinking deeper and deeper in the mud each day.

Have written all the people who sent me things.

Love, CARL.



*The Following Letters Were Received
After Carl Went Down*

April 13, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

We have moved again, right to the Front this time. I can see the "Sausages" on the front from my window and at first was kept awake nights by the noise of the guns.

We are situated in Paradise, at least Paradise compared to our last place. We have an old Army Post at our disposal. The officers are living in the main building which is equipped with baths, running water, electric lights (they don't light as yet) and tile floors. That is sure luxury. Our mess is served in the same building; so that we don't have to put on our rubber boots to go to mess any more.

We had to fire all the kitchen crew today because they were too dirty and were passing too many pies out the back entry to their friends. The chops were a little raw this noon (the first meal under the new regime) but otherwise O. K.

Your letter from S. C. just arrived. Glad to hear that Joe is enroute.

Love, CARL.



April 14, 1918.

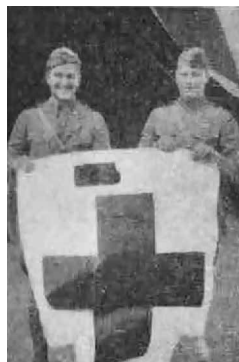
DEAR MOTHER:

This morning at 9 o'clock two Boche planes were brought down on our field. At 8:45 a message came that two Boche were 10 kilometers east of (*censored.*) Lieutenants Campbell and Winslow were on "alerte," so they immediately went up. They had only gotten about 400 metres high when we saw two Boche dive out of the clouds. One of them opened fire on Winslow who had not seen them. Winslow turned and pulled up above his man, dove down on him and fired a dozen or so shots when the Boche decided that he had had enough, and came down and landed. He turned over but was not hurt.

In the meantime Campbell was fighting the other man. He had not seen the Boche until he heard the machine gun. He turned to see what was up and saw the second Boche right on his tail and ready to shoot. He dove underneath the Boche (thought it was a biplane with a gunner in the rear) then pulled up and shot from below. He shot about 150 rounds. The Boche took fire and immediately descended. As he was only about 200 metres high he got down before he was burned to death. He must have undone his belt because when he landed the machine turned over and threw him 15 metres—he owes his life to that. His ankle was fractured and his face slightly burned, but he looked mighty pleased to be alive. They said that they were lost in the mist; that they were bringing the machines from the factory to the front. The last sounds unlikely as the guns were loaded and no plane coming from a factory has its guns loaded.

The body of the plane (the one that did not burn) was beautifully made, but the wings and wires look like poor material to me. Inclosed is a piece of the wing covering. I got some pictures of the machines and will send you some as soon as they come back.

I will make my first patrol tomorrow. Adjust my sight this afternoon



Campbell (left) first American Ace. Winslow (right) fell behind lines while in combat, suffered broken arm, and taken prisoner.

With love, CARL.



April 14, 1918.

DEAR DAD:

Well, we are on the Front at last. I have gotten a plane assigned to me and have been watching the mechanics put on my machine gun this afternoon. Tomorrow morning I will adjust my sights and then be ready for real work. I guess we will have enough of it. There are four Boche Chasse escadrille opposite us, to say nothing of the bombers and observers that we will have to chase. The plan is to have three patrols a day (two hours each) and one patrol to stay at the hangars all day as an "alerte" to receive reports of Boche planes from the observing posts and go up after them.

Major Lufbury has been in the air four and five hours every day since we have been here. He has not done any work for three months and is certainly coming back strong. He wants to run up his scalps. Yesterday he found three Boche and attacked them. One fell but he couldn't follow it to the ground as he had the other two to watch. He chased them 15 kilometers into Germany, then came back to report and see if he could get a confirmation on the Boche which fell. To have credit for a Boche it must be confirmed by an observer in two of three branches of the service—an artillery, infantry or balloon observer. I haven't heard what luck he has had.

Last night a message came at seven o'clock that there was a Boche over the city at the side of which we are stationed. Major Lufbury jumped into a side car and hurried over to the hangar, got out his machine and went up. But by the time he reached any altitude the Boche was miles off—probably back in his own lines. He just landed when some of the men pointed out some French shrapnel bursts. He swung his machine around and went up again like a shot. He disappeared in the distance and didn't come back again for an hour; he was too late again. He has been out twice today. The second time he brought down a plane and landed on another field to see if he could get it confirmed; haven't heard his luck. One time in a big attack he brought down four planes and only got credit for one. The insignia of our Escadrille (94th Aero Squadron) is Uncle Sam's hat in a ring. If you ever see that insignia on a plane you will know it is the 94th. I have christened my plane "Lord Geof." (Lord Geoffrey Amherst.)

Hear we are to get flying pay. Will be able to stand the mess dues then.

Love, CARL.

* * *

DEAR MR. CONDUCT:

Many thanks for your interest in my "hard luck." "H. L." is about the most common thing in the army and when I hear some other men tell their army tale I feel that I am certainly a lucky boy. The poor cusses that got no commission at all when they thought they were enlisting as cadet officers but soon found out that they were destined for a private's job in the trenches makes my tale look pretty weak. Everyone "kicks" in the army. That is the most common way of killing time. The private cusses the sergeant, the sergeant the lieutenants, and the lieut. the higher officers. It must go hard with Pres. Wilson who can't "pass the buck along" (place the blame on someone higher).

I am glad to hear that you are looking ahead to the time when you can go into the army voluntarily. There may be a lot of men that think they are "old" serving in the trenches before this thing is over.

CARL.

* * *

April 22, 1918.

DEAR MOTHER:

Well I have been baptized with fire. I have made my first patrols. My initiation took place from 6 to 7 A. M. three days ago. I was on the first patrol with Captain Peterson, an old Lafayette man as patrol leader, and Taylor who flew on the right wing while I took the left. We got off just at 6. We flew directly toward the lines, climbing all the time so as to have some height when we reached there. All the way out I was having a hard time getting my motor regulated—it was my second ride in this particular machine and the fourth in this type; and when we reached the lines I was slowly dropping behind and los-

ing comparative altitude. By the time we were well over the lines, I was so far behind and below that I decided that I would be too easy meat for some scalp-hunting Boche so I turned around and started back on the way home.

I got my machine regulated so decided to go back and hunt for Captain Peterson and Taylor. After seeing the fight here over the field a few days before, I felt sure that I could run faster than any Boche, and didn't intend to put up much of a showing in case a Boche did appear on the scene. I was out there just to look around, see how the lines ran, and learn to tell a Boche plane when I saw it at a distance. This distinguishing a German plane from an Allied plane is quite an art and takes a good deal of practice. During my first trip I guess there was nothing out except myself and the other two men of the patrol, at least, the other men didn't see anything, and I am sure I didn't. But some of the other men have gone out with Major Lufbury for their first ride when things were a little livelier but as far as they were concerned there was nothing in the air but themselves and made that report, but the Major had usually seen a couple of Boche, one or two balloons and a few French planes.

I knew of this difficulty and I certainly kept a sharp lookout. "Three looks behind to one forward," is an aviation maxim. That morning I made it about five to one. I was twisting and turning, climbing up and going down in such rapid succession that I am sure no German would ever have gotten very close to me without my seeing him. I was over the lines for an hour learning the sector and incidentally looking for the rest of my patrol but I never found them, nor did they see me. The clouds were at about a thousand metres and quite thick and were getting thicker all the time. I had reached one end of our sector and had decided to go back to the other end and go home. So I twisted back and forth until I thought I must be at the other end but was not sure as the clouds had become so thick that only now and then could I see the ground.

At the east end of our sector the line turns from an east-west direction to approximately north-south. I had gone east too far so consequently was over the German lines. I decided to come down to see where I was. I thought I was south of our own trenches but what I thought were ours turned out to be Boche. I cut my engine and came down through the clouds. Just as I came out of the clouds I heard a crack! crack! I looked off to one side and saw small black puffs of smoke which I knew were Boche anti-aircraft shells exploding. A sec-

and later I saw red streaks going past me on the other side and I knew that these were the tracer bullets from machine guns. I looked down at the ground and saw that I was exactly over the German trenches. I put on my motor and headed for the nearest cloud. It couldn't have taken me more than a minute to get to it, but it sure seemed long. All the time I could hear the shells exploding and now and then see another streak of a tracer. When I reached my cloud I changed my direction and then just jumped from one to another. I headed southwest for ten minutes, came down below the clouds again and was right over our field. When I had landed I looked over my plane; there wasn't a bullethole in it.

That afternoon I volunteered for a patrol but while in the air two wires from my spark plugs to the distributor broke and I had to come back.

The next morning I was on the first patrol again. We patrolled for an hour then started home. I thought I would see how far I could glide without a motor. While enroute I turned to have a look behind me and saw a plane right on my tail. At a second glance I saw it was one of our own: it was Bill Loomis. We had a mock battle for about five minutes and then started for home. I noticed it was getting very misty but thought I could beat it home. When I got over our field I could just make out the tops of our hangars; once in a while I could see the ground thru an opening. I decided to try to land and that is when I made my mistake. I should have gone south until I got ahead of the fog.

I made a tour of the field and came in as slowly as possible. I see-sawed so as to not over-shoot. All of a sudden I saw the ground right in front of me while I was yet over on one side. I slammed everything to the other side and pulled back. It came over straight but didn't have time to pull up. It hit the ground at about a forty-five degree angle, smashed in the landing gear, crushed the whole front of the machine and turned over. It was a total wreck. "Lord Geoffrey" had to be buried. The total damage sustained by me is a black eye. Mine was the fourth machine broken in four days. Yesterday we flew six new ones from our old field to here to keep us going.

Marian and Joe seem to be making the most of New York.

Received six of your letters two days ago. Expect you are in the cottage now. Sure will be glad to see Joe over here. Think you better go slow on passing around my letters. People don't always have the inter-

est they pretend to. Remember I am not the only “Mother’s Son” over here. Don’t know whether the Boche is “Stupid” or not. If he is I think we need a little touch of it.

Two of our men, the ones who brought down the two German planes on our field were decorated with the Croix de Guerre, a couple of days ago. Took movies of the ceremony. You may see me right at home.

Love, CARL.

* * *

April 30, 1918.

DEAR DAD:

Things have been quiet lately. These French springs sure do hold on. Have begun to think that the sun never shines in this part of the country. Two days ago I had a chance to see the sun, but I had to go up above the clouds to do it. I was on the sunset patrol and it cleared up along that time sufficient to let us go out. So Campbell, Davis and I went out to shoo off the Boche that might have ventured over the lines. Campbell was leader and he sure makes his patrol hump some to follow. Since he brought down one of the Boche on the field he has been foaming at the bit in his anxiety to get at some more. He twists and turns, climbs and peeks in such rapid succession that you have all that you can do to follow without bothering about looking for Boche.

Well, he finally made a dive below the clouds to see if there were any Boche we had missed. Davis lost Campbell. I was following Davis but soon lost him in the mist under the clouds. I picked up Campbell a little later but he soon lost me in a second plunge thru the clouds. I gave up and went home. Campbell came in ten minutes later. Davis floated in ten minutes after Campbell, and said that he had landed at a French aviation camp thirty kilometers southwest of us. Not a very successful patrol.

Cunningham, my second bunkie, is having trouble with his eyes and may have to drop out. Says he will go into infantry before he will take a non-flying job.

Dinsmore Ely from Winnetka, Ill., was killed last week; he was one of my best friends in the Franco-American crowd. Herman White-more, another of our old crowd and also one of the best fellows I knew has been reported “not returned,” at least so Stanly wrote me,

but I haven't heard for sure. This makes two out of a groupe of seven (Groupe P-3) that went thru Pau, Cazaux and Plessis-Belleville together that have been lost. Stanly, Buffum, Corsi are still with the French. Davis and I are here together.

The squadron got another Boche last night. Capt. Hall and Ed. Rickenbacker found one ten kilometers inside Germany and made short work of him.

Love, CARL.

* * *

Mailed May Fourth, 1918.

DEAR DAD:

Things are still quiet, continued bad weather. Last night I called on some American girls at a French hospital for refugee women and children. Had quite a time; girls pleasant, pretty and American. Guess they are doing a good work, sure have to work non-union hours (about ten hours a day). They have been stuck up there for six months and were as glad to see someone from the "Patria" as we were.

Signed up for \$200.00 worth of bonds, pay in \$20.00 installments. Am counting on getting that flying pay, if I don't I will be poorer than I was in the French army at 2 francs 40 per day. CARL.

* * *

May 2, 1918.

DEAR KATHERINE:

Your box of "Zu Zu's," dates, gum, etc., came just after I had posted my last letter to you. It is a right tasty box and was enjoyed by four others besides myself. This is the first *real* day we have had and our planes are going out and coming in continually. Made one patrol this morning a little after sunrise but saw nothing but mist and Boche eclate. On from 4 to 6 again this afternoon so you can see a clear day is a busy day for us.

Love to the family, CARL.

Lieutenant Chapman was brought down by an enemy plane inside the German lines on May 3rd, 1918. This carte letter to his cousin, Katherine Chapman, was found in the drawer of the table in his room.

(Signed) P. W. DAVIS,
2nd Lt., A. S. S. C., U. S. R.

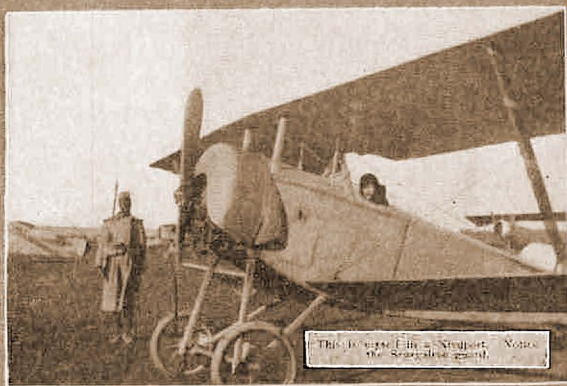
SNAPSHOTS



This was taken at Pau. It gives you some idea of what we wear. Notice the helmet and goggles in my hands. He is posing in the background.



Dear Dad:
Here is a picture of your youngest while in Nice. I saw there with six other fellows from school and met Canadians, English, French and Americans—some very interesting.
—GARY



This is what I'm a Struport. Notice
the Scarsdale guard.



F29 at Port. Dec. 1912



Roll' Spiller's sample at Avond,
July, 1917.



Pan. Francis, Dec. 17, 1917. From left to right—Ez. Gifford at Villavieja, April 18, 1918; Thompson, Frazier, Whittemore, Berghs, Antrim, Lee, Sullivan, Oakes, Fairchild, Macle, Calahan, Davis.



This is where I was injured at the time of the first fight. I am sitting on the steps.



Lozano and Davis,
Vulturno.



"Hill-top 90"
Avard, Aug., 1917



Lt. Winslow and his plane which he forced to descend.
Notice the "cross" is not the customary medical cross.



This is a "Nieuport." It is the Nieuport
that took a wing off of the enemy com-
mander's machine and then killed him.



Here is "your" tool,"
standing in the yard of the
"Cafe des Aiglons." This
is the outfit we get for camp
wear. The coat, hat and tun-
ties are blue. Notice my
"clever" pin.



Pvt. David W. N.
Company
March 1918



Major Mudge
Villeneuve 1918



Lt. James M. Moore, 54th Aero Squadron, "Somehow
in France," May, 1918. About the middle of June, Lt.
Moore became Captain in command of the 14th Signal
Bn. and later was made a Major.



Mr. Burt, April, 1917



Here is the old "bunker" looking
at Columbia and the river.



* * *

TELEGRAM.

Washington, D. C., 4:43 P. M., May 14.

Mr. Charles W. Chapman, Sr.,

West Third Street, Waterloo, Iowa

Deeply regret to inform you that Lieutenant Charles W. Chapman, Aviation Section Signal Corps is officially reported as missing in action May Third. No further information at present. Will report first information received.

MCCAIN, The Adjutant General.

* * *

COPY OF CABLE FROM MAJOR LUFBURY.

Chapman brought down within German lines in flames May Third. Small hope. In communication with International Red Cross. Will cable result. Probably six weeks.

RAOUL LUFBURY.

* * *

Hqrs. 94th Aero Squadron, S. C.,
1st Pursuit Group, Z. of A., Amer. E. F.
May 8th, 1918.

MR. CHARLES W. CHAPMAN, Waterloo, Iowa.

My Dear Sir: It is with a great deal of regret that I have to inform you that your son, 2nd Lieutenant Charles W. Chapman, Jr., has been

missing since May 3rd, 1918. He was sent out on patrol with four other pilots on that date. At about 10:30 A. M. four monoplane and one bi-plane enemy planes were sighted and a combat immediately ensued. Your son very courageously attacked the biplane and shot it down. While thus engaged, an enemy monoplane disengaged itself from the combat, and having the advantage of higher altitude, drove your son's plane down in flames. He was avenged some minutes later by Captain Peterson, who, in turn, drove down in flames, your son's foe.

The combat terminated well within the German lines in the region of Autrepierre at 10:40 A. M., May 3rd, 1918.

There is, of course, a hope that your son may have succeeded in making a landing, in which case he is a prisoner.

The American Red Cross has an organization in its committee at Berne, Switzerland, and in the International Red Cross at Geneva, Switzerland, by means of which it is possible to receive news regarding the fate of American pilots and observers falling within the enemy lines. This organization (Home Communication Service) was immediately furnished with the above information, together with the machine and engine number of your son's plane. Any news conveyed to us from this organization will be immediately transmitted to you. Rest assured that every possible channel of communication will be utilized to ascertain the whereabouts of your son.

The personal effects of 2nd. Lieut. Charles W. Chapman, contained in one locker trunk and one box, have been turned over to Major Tolley, Q. M. C., 26th Division, for transfer to Effects Depot, Base Section No. 1, S. O. S. The Effects Depot has been notified that your son also had one trunk in storage at the Hotel Sylvia, Paris. Also that he had an account at Morgan-Harjes & Co., Bankers, Paris. Your son's life was insured for \$10,000 by the U. S. Government through the War Risk Insurance Bureau.

Allow me to extend to you my sincere sympathy at the loss or capture of your very gallant son, whom I considered one of our most competent and courageous pilots.

J. W. F. M. Huffer,
Major, A. S. S. C., U. S. R.



(COPY OF TELEGRAM FROM MR. WILBUR W. MARSH)

Washington, D. C., June 1, 1918, 3 P. M.

CHAS. W. CHAPMAN, 637 W. 3d St., Waterloo, Iowa.

The State Department has confirmation of Carl's death. He was buried southwest of Remoncourt, and his grave was marked. Sincerely do I regret to learn and convey to you the information which extinguished the last hope that he escaped.

(Signed) WILBUR W. MARSH.



TELEGRAM.

Washington, D. C., 7:08 P. M., June 3, '18.

CHARLES W. CHAPMAN, SR.,
637 W. THIRD ST., WATERLOO, IOWA.

Deeply regret to inform you that Lieut. Charles W. Chapman, Signal Corps, is now reported by the Red Cross as dead. MCCAIN, The Adjutant General.



Comite International De La Croix-Rouge
Agence International Des Prisonniers de Guerre.
Geneve, 9th August, 1918.

To the Family of Lieutenant Charles W. Chapman,
637 West 3rd St., Waterloo, Iowa.

Dear Sir:

It is our sad duty to hand you enclosed a copy of an official notification of the decease of Lieutenant Charles Wesley Chapman, signed by the German military authorities.

A similar copy has been forwarded to the Adjutant General's Office, Washington, D. C. The original will be kept at this office until we receive instructions from the War Department relative to the transmission of such documents. We remain, dear sir,

(Signed)

Very truly yours,

COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
GENEVE,
AGENCE INTERNATIONAL DES PRISONNIERS
DE GUERRE

By M. HENTSCH.



INTERNATIONAL COMITÉ

COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
GENÈVE
AGENCE INTERNATIONALE DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

DÉCÈS - TODESFALL COPY.

Nom et prénoms CHAPMAN, CHARLES WESLEY
Name und Vornamen

Unité (corps, rég., batt.) et N° de matricule (inscriptions figurant sur la plaque d'identité)
Truppeneinheit und Erkennungsmarke

Lieu et date de naissance
Geburtsort und Datum

Adresse de la famille
Adresse der Angehörigen

Quand a-t-il été fait prisonnier ?
Wann geriet er in Gefangenschaft?

Lieu et date du décès 3.5.1918 bei Remoncourt (Granatkapelle)
Ort und Datum des Todes nach Grabsaufschrift.

Cause de la mort Absturz mit Flugzeug (Nach Angabe)
Todesursache

Lieu de sépulture 4-500 M. sud-estlich Granatkapelle
Grabstätte and 750 M. sudwestlich von Remoncourt.

La tombe est-elle marquée et pourra-t-elle être retrouvée plus tard par la famille ? Auf dem Grab befindet sich ein Kreuz
Etat du Grab ein besonderes Zeichen und könne es mit der Inschrift "Fliegerleutnant
später von der Familie aufgesucht werden ? CHAPMAN, Charles" und kann später von
der Familie aufgesucht werden.

De quels objets se composait la succession ?
Welche Gegenstände bilden den Nachlass ?

Seront-ils envoyés avec l'acte de décès par les soins du Ministère de la guerre ?
Werden dieselben der Familie durch das Kriegaministerium mit der Sterbeurkunde zugestellt ?

Dans le cas où la famille n'aurait pas encore été prévenue, un ecclésiastique, un médecin ou une infirmière ayant assisté le défunt dans sa maladie ou à ses derniers moments, pourrait-il nous faire parvenir, afin que nous les transmettions à la famille, quelques détails sur les derniers moments et l'ensevelissement ?

Falls die Familie von dem Ableben des Soldaten noch nicht unterrichtet worden ist, könnte uns nicht ein Geistlicher, ein Arzt oder eine Krankenschwester, die den Toten gepflegt und umgeben haben, einige ausführliche Nachrichten über die letzten Augenblicke seines Lebens und sein Begräbnis zukommen lassen, damit wir diese den Angehörigen mitteilen können ?

(Date, timbre et signature de l'autorité compétente :
(Datum, Stempel und Unterschrift der zuständigen Behörde :
certifié conforme
den 9. April 1918
M. Weigand

Signatures et adresses de deux témoins
Unterschrift und Adresse zweier Zeugen
sign.: WEIGAND Lt.
Bayr.Lw.Inf. Reg. 4 - 4 Kom.Kp.
sign.: Seitz Sergt. 3. Komp.Bayr.Lw.
Inf. Regt. 4.

(TRANSLATION OF NOTIFICATION)

Dated May 3rd, 1918.

Near Remoncourt (Granatkapelle)

According to writing on grave, he fell with his machine (as indicated) 400 or 500 metres south-east of Granatkapelle and 750 metres S. W. of Remoncourt. On the grave is a cross with the inscription, Lt. of Aviation, Charles Chapman.

It can later on be located by the family.

(Signed)

Lt. Weigand,

Lt. Officer Landwehr, Inf. Reg. 4-4 KP.

Witness: Serg. Seitz, 3 Komp Officer Landwehr Inf. Reg. 4.

Hdqrs. 94th Aero Squadron, S. C .
1st Pursuit Group, Z. of A., Amer. E. F.
May 20th, 1918.

MR. CHARLES W. CHAPMAN,

Waterloo, Iowa.

Dear Sir: I am forwarding you, under separate cover, Citation by the French 8th Army and "Croix de Guerre," with Palm, awarded your son by the French Military Authorities in recognition of his heroic combat on May 3rd, 1918.

Will you kindly acknowledge receipt of same?

Yours sincerely,

J. W. F. M. HUFFER,

Major, A. S. Sig. R. C.



WAR DEPARTMENT
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
Washington

December 4, 1918.

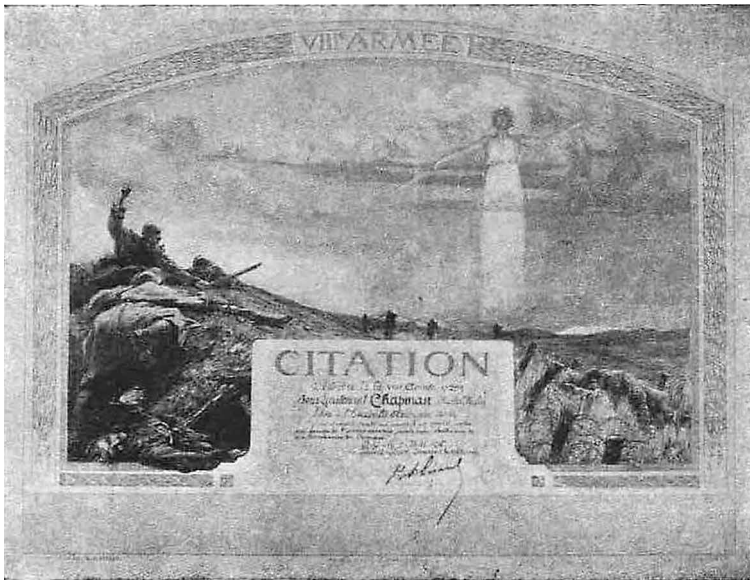
MR. C. W. CHAPMAN,
637 W. Third St., Waterloo, Iowa.

Dear Sir: This office has been advised by cablegram by the Commanding General, American Expeditionary Forces, that he has awarded a Distinguished Service Cross posthumously to your son, 2d Lieutenant Charles W. Chapman, Jr., for the following act: "On May 3, 1918, in the region of Autrepierre, France, while on patrol duty, he courageously attacked a group of four monoplanes and one biplane and succeeded in bringing one down before he himself was shot down in flames."



Under War Department orders, the Distinguished Service Cross in this case will be furnished to the nearest relative of the officer, and it becomes necessary for this office to determine the name and address of the nearest relative. Will you kindly use the inclosed penalty envelope which requires no postage and inform this office whether Lieutenant Chapman was married and if so the name and address of his widow if she be living; or if he left no widow whether you are the sole surviving parent.

Very respectfully,
RALPH HARRIS,
Adjutant General.



**Translation
of Citation**

**By order of the VIII Army
No. 209**

**Second Lieutenant Chapman – Charles – Wesley – Pilot
of the American Squadron No. 94. Gloriously died—during a battle against a
group of five enemy aeroplanes—and after having sent down one
of his adversaries in flames.**

May 9th, 1918

The General Gerard, Commanding the VIII Army



COMMENTARY

(COPY OF LETTER FROM LIEUT. JAMES A. MEISSNER
OF THE 94th AERO SQUADRON)

May 12th, 1918.

MY DEAR MRS. CHAPMAN:

At this time, written sympathy seems altogether inadequate to quell the sorrow that must arise from the loss of your son, Charles. But, if expressions of friendship, and of the highest respect for one of our number, can in anyway soften the grief, by assuring you of our pride in having known his brave, fearless character, shown many times thru his schooling and at the front, then I shall feel I have helped a little. The whole Squadron feels his loss deeply, for constant cheerfulness makes many friends and lightens many hardships. I do not doubt but that he died with a smile on his lips, confident in the success of his attack and glorying in the thrill of an air battle. Nothing can be more consolation to you than that he was doing his utmost for his country in the service in which but the best are found—the air fighters. The life at the front is glorious, and death even more so in its suddenness.

I am writing on Mother's Day, knowing how my own mother would feel under circumstances similar to yours.

With deepest sympathy,

Very Sincerely,

(Signed) JAMES A. MEISSNER.

94th Aero Squadron. A. E. F.



94th Aero Squadron,
U. S. A. P. O. 709, Z. of A.
May 24th, 1918.

DEAR MR. AND MRS. CHAPMAN:

I wish to tell you how I and all of us in this squadron sympathize and suffer with you in the loss of your noble son, who was always such a good comrade of ours. His good humor and wit were always a great pleasure to us. We all admired him for his skill, for he was one of our best pilots. We could not have had a better companion and we therefore appreciate all the more keenly the terrible loss that you and all of us have suffered.

I feel the blow even more than some of the others, because I was so fortunate as to be with "Pick" more than perhaps any of the others. We first became acquainted on the boat coming over. We went down to Avord together and were in most of the classes there at the same time. Many evenings we walked back to the barracks together after eating supper at the cafe on the way back from the Bleriot Piste, while "Pick" pointed out the constellations in the sky and we planned our future in aviation.

Then we were at Pau together, and afterwards at Cazaux. I remember how pleased "Pick" was to be able to go there. Then we went to Plessis-Belleville, first Verrines, then Plessis itself and then to Thiers. After that we went over to the American army and arrived at Issoudun on the same day, afterwards leaving for the front with the 94th. We have been room-mates in nearly every place.

I was on that fatal patrol when "Pick" was brought down. We were patrolling about five kilometers inside the German lines. "Pick" and Bill Loomis, another Amherst boy, attacked five Boche way down below. Before we were able to reach the scene he had been hit. One of the Boche was brought down. "Pick" certainly well deserved the Citation carrying the Croix de Guerre, which the French gave him, and of which you can indeed be proud. His death, though saddening to all of us, who loved him so well, was a noble one in a fight against great odds.

I have fixed up his personal effects and they have been sent back to you. I enclose some kodak films which were being developed or which had been lent to others. He lost a duffle bag on the way from

Cazaux to Plessis-Belleville and a suit case, which he left on the train coming back from his permission at Nice. You will find some correspondence between him and various station agents. I remember for several months he tried to locate that suit case, working out letters in French, but finally had to give it up.

If there is any information that you want, or if there is anything I can do for you, I wish you would let me know.

I send you my most sincere sympathy.

Very sincerely yours,

PHILIP W. DAVIS.

(Note: Lieut. Davis fell in combat June 2nd, 1918, behind the German lines.)



AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE FUND.

40 State Street, Boston, Mass.

Lee, Higginson & Co.
Depositories

Room 44
Fort Hill 4715
Main 5400

June 14th, 1918.

MR. C. W. CHAPMAN,

Waterloo, Iowa.

My Dear Mr. Chapman: Thank you for the reply to our circular letter regarding your son. We are so truly sorry your answer could not have been in a different vein. Just a day before, the newspapers told us the story. As we were all acquainted with him personally in the Boston office, it is needless to say we referred to him many times that day and in the days that followed.

Such a wonderful, manly fellow! He often came in with three or four other Amherst college boys, and our interest in those boys was particularly keen. May I venture to express how very sorry we all feel—the few of us who are now left in the office. You and your noble son are doing and have done your part in the struggle.

I do not need to tell you that our little notes of sympathy have become a daily occurrence. This morning's casualty list names two of

our former boys killed in aviation in France—one the son of Sidney Drew—another missing. Please believe me,

With sympathy,
E. E. Whalen,
for American Field Service.

* * *

94th Aero Squadron, A. E. F., France.

DEAR MR. AND MRS. CHAPMAN:

Two letters, enclosed herewith, arrived a few days ago and I am returning them.

Your son has been with me off and on ever since we sailed together on May 19th and I can't help expressing my sincerest sympathy in such a tremendous loss. He was last seen in combat in the German lines, about five kilometers, perhaps half way between Luneville and the Voges. I was occupied by three Albatros at the moment so I did not see his accident.

If there is anything I can tell you or do for you in his behalf, please ask it, because he was one of my best friends here. Very sincerely yours,

WILLIAM F. LOOMIS

* * *

AMHERST COLLEGE

AMHERST, MASS.

Office of the Dean

GEORGE D. OLDS, DEAN.

June 13, 1918.

MY DEAR MR. CHAPMAN:

Thank you very much for your two letters, with enclosures. The messages from Charles were intensely interesting and made me realize as nothing else has how much the country has lost in his death.

You know, I suppose, already that along with the rest of the 1918 boys who went into the service of the nation his name was sent by our Faculty to the Trustee for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts, *honoris causa*,—and the Degree was formally bestowed, last Wednesday. His name, too, is in golden letters on the corridor wall of our beautiful new library—which is to serve as our Hall of Fame.

I only hope that such genuine, though inadequate, appreciation may be something of a consolation, to you and yours. With best wishes, I remain,

Cordially yours,

(Signed) GEORGE D. OLDS.

* * *

THE AIRMAN'S EXALTATION.

(Editorial, Davenport, Iowa, paper)

As Raoul Lufbury, American ace, is buried with military honors, one recalls what Norman Hall said just before he started on his last flight.

"Poor Chapman had tough luck," he said, referring to the death of another American airman. "He's the first now. It's a gamble who will be next, but no one here is worrying. It's a great life while it lasts. There's nothing like it. We never think of danger. You see an enemy machine and you get it or it gets you. It's as certain for one as for the other."

And with that Hall whirled off, scanning the sky for trace of foe. He and Chapman and Lufbury had lived more in a year or two, up there above the clouds, than the average clod lives in three score years and ten. What was the use of worrying? They were really living.

* * *

THE FIRST MAN.

(From "Amherst Student," May 6th, 1918)

The first undergraduate has given his life for his country, the first Amherst man has died in battle. The name of Charles W. Chapman, Jr., of the class of 1918, is in the list of those who, put to the supreme

test, have brought honor to themselves and to their country. The loss of this man, whom many of us knew, is hard to realize; the sense of loss that increasing realization brings, cannot be expressed.

Quiet, congenial, helpful, Chapman lived among us and made a host of friends by his sincerity and kindness. He was one of those men always ready and able to do his share. The honor he won for himself was the recognition and respect of his college mates for his pleasing and worthy personality.

In his death, Chapman was true to himself and rendered unflinchingly the full measure of his devotion to a cause we all hold dear. There is little that can be said to adequately honor him or to express the spirit of loss we must feel. There is one thing that we can resolve, to endeavor to live as worthily and, if necessary, to die as bravely as this first man on our undergraduate roll of honor.



IN OUR STREET.

(From Waterloo Courier and Reporter, May 21, 1918)

The street is not an ostentatious one, neither is it picturesque in the faded colors of poverty. It is just a street of pretty homes, bits of green lawn, well-kept gardens, very clean windows and well-scrubbed porches; a street of giant trees whose branches droop languidly over the curbing, where children in pretty white dresses play in the shade—it's the sort of street that the boys over there dream of at night, as they slumber fitfully thru the uproar of a mad world, their uniforms gray with the dust and stained with caked mud.

It's the sort of street they wandered down last summer in the evening with the finger tips of the "only one" resting lightly on their sleeve while the murmur of laughter tinkled softly in harmony with the song of the girl who sat in the evening shadows and touched with dreamy hands the key of the piano. It's the sort of street that gives glimpses of warm lights at night and golden glows in the upper windows, where you know mothers are listening to sleepy ones recite, "Now I lay me;" where the boys are sprawling across the floor reading and where—oh you know the sort of street—America's street. And now—

Well, in the block between South and Wellington Streets, Third Street is to outward appearance just about the same as it was a year ago, as green and fresh and clean and quiet—ah—that's it—quiet, so very quiet. You don't understand at first why this is so, for the children are still there and life is lived as usual, unhurried, calm. You have to walk up and down and look at the windows and then you know. In windows are hung the red bordered flag, tiny stars in the center. In one home there are three stars in the flag; in another just across the street there are two. And then you know that from just two homes five boys have gone on the great adventure to free the world. And between those homes are the homes where only one has gone, perhaps that one was all the home had to give.

This same condition applies to many streets in Waterloo, but in this case it is particularly striking because of the close proximity of the home that has made the supreme sacrifice. And in homes where there is no service flag, there is a Red Cross gleaming forth, or a food card pledge displayed or the folds of Old Glory floating in the breeze.

Streets of Waterloo tell a silent story of the struggle in which this nation is just commencing to engage. Perhaps, by this time next summer, the little stars now seen in the service flags will be replaced by gold ones. Perhaps the boy represented by a star will have fallen on a field in France to be buried thousands of miles from home and loved ones. Be that as it may, streets of Waterloo tell a vivid story of the city's patriotism.



In Memory of Carl Chapman

By HARRY LEROY HAYWOOD

(Inscribed to His Parents)

In these dear streets he played, he ran,
 As boy, as youth, as budding man:
 They nevermore shall hear his tread!
 For now unseen abroad he fares
 Adown the endless thoroughfares,
 The long hereafter of the dead.

Unchanged they lie, his old home streets,
 But now no more his presence greets
 His many a loved and faithful friend:
 Unchanged they lie, and yet a light,
 Far cast from his heroic flight,
 Doth change, doth all transfigure them!

How could they lie as once they lay
 Ere he forsook our slothful way
 To prove by one surpassing deed—
 To prove to us, so slack of will,
 How in our land there liveth still
 The old, heroic, deathless breed!

O dauntless youth, O soul of fire,
 Enskied, you had a winged pyre;
 You fell to death enwrapped with flame:
 You fell, but from your ashes rise
 What consecrates your sacrifice—
 The honor of your country's name!



“God Gave My Son In Trust To Me”

By MRS. JAMES HUGHES

This poem was written by the wife of Colonel James Hughes of the Canadian Army, who lost their only son at the front. We are adding this because of the beautiful sentiment expressed.

God gave my son in trust to me;
 Christ died for him and he should be
 A man for Christ. He is His own

And God's and man's; not mine alone.
He was not mine to "give." He gave
Himself that he might help save
All that Christians should revere,
All that enlightened men hold dear.
"To feed the guns?" O torpid soul!
Awake and see life as a whole.
When freedom, honor, justice, right,
Were threatened by the despot's might,
With heart aflame and soul alight
He bravely went for God to fight
Against base savages whose pride
The laws of God and man defied;
Who maidens pure and sweet defiled;
He did not go to "feed the guns."
He went to save from ruthless Huns
His home and country, and to be
A guardian of democracy.
"What if he does not come?" you say.
Ah, well, my sky would be more gray,
But through the clouds the sun would shine
And vital memories be mine.
God's test of manhood is, I know,
Not "will he come" but "did he go?"
And yet he went with purpose high
To fight for peace, and overthrow
The plan of Christ's relentless foe.
He dreaded not the battlefield;
He went to make fierce vandals yield.
If he comes not again to me

I shall be sad, but not that he
Went like a man, a hero true,
His part unselfishly to do.
My heart will feel exultant pride
That for humanity he died.
“Forgotten grave?” This selfish plea
Awakes no deep response in me,
For though his grave I may not see
My boy will ne’er forgotten be.
My real son can never die;
‘Tis but his body that may lie
In foreign land, and I shall keep
Remembrance fond, forever, deep
Within my heart of my true son
Because of triumphs that he won.
“It matters not where some men live,”
If my dear son his life must give
Hosannas I will sing for him,
E’en though my eyes with tears are dim,
And when the war is over, when
His gallant comrades come again,
I’ll cheer them as they’re marching by,
Rejoicing that they did not die,
And when his vacant place I see
My heart will bound with joy that he
Was mine so long—my fine young son,
And cheer for him whose work is done.
Toronto, Canada.



The following letter and pictures from Captain J. M. Brearton arrived after the book had been printed and was just ready to be bound up and completed; not too late, however, to reproduce them and have included in the form of an Addenda.

MR. C. W. CHAPMAN,
Waterloo, Iowa.

MY DEAR MR. CHAPMAN:

Yesterday, I found opportunity to get to Remoncourt and from there I encountered no difficulty in locating Carl's grave.

I was accompanied by Lt. John Wilcox, Aerial Observer and Sgt. Faderberg of the Photographic Section stationed at Toul where I am now undergoing a course of instruction in aerial observation. We left the Airdrome at 9:00 A. M., arriving in Remoncourt at 11:15. The trip could have been made in less time but for the fact that from Embermeuil to Remoncourt we traveled over roads that have been in No-Man's Land since 1915 and for that reason are badly in need of repair.

Embermeuil is shot to pieces and uninhabited. Remoncourt was not damaged to a great extent but is uninhabited but for a half dozen families who have returned since the armistice, a very small garrison of French troops and a Chinese labor company. While we were in the village, two more families came in carrying their effects on their backs.

We set out after securing an enlarged map from the French lieutenant and went to the Capelle de la Grenade which is 1750 metres southwest of Remoncourt instead of 750 as stated in the letter received by you from the Comite International de la Croix-Rouge. The Capelle is nothing more than a small one-room stone structure such as are usually built by the roadside to store road mending tools. The Germans had built dugouts there and were using it as a post of command at the time of the armistice.

Directly to the southeast of the Capelle, 400 yards distant, is a very small pine grove containing several dugouts and trenches. On approaching this grove from the northwest, the most conspicuous object to be seen from a distance of 150 yards was the rude, weather-bleached,



Close up view discloses the inscription “Hier ruht Fliegerleutnant Charles Chapman, gef. Am 3. V. 1918.” “Here lies Flying Lieutenant Charles Chapman. Died on 3 May 1918.”

wooden cross which marks Carl’s grave as shown in the lower picture on the opposite page.

The spot is on the back edge of a trench just at the northeast corner of the grove. The above picture affords you a close-up view of the cross which bears the following inscription in German: “Hier ruht Fliegerleutnant Charles Chapman. Gef. 3. V. 1918.” (“Here lies Flying-Lieutenant Charles Chapman. Died 3 May, 1918.”)



Looking south. Capt. Brearton and Lt. Wilcox.



Looking toward the west. Directly beyond the cross is the entrance to a steel-covered shelter from shrapnel fire, the entrance opening into the trench which runs between the cross and the shelter.

You will observe at the foot of the cross, a wreath of boughs with oak leaves entwined while the grave is covered to its full length with ever-green boughs.

The picture above gives you an idea of the proximity of the grave to the edge of the trench as the entrance to the steel-covered bomb-proof is on the far side of the trench. This trench and those previously mentioned were a part of the German second line; the first line trenches being 500–700 metres forward in the direction of Embermeuil, through which ran the French first line trenches.



The first glimpse of the grave of Lt. Charles Chapman on approaching from the direction of the Capelle de la Grenade.

I have two maps of this area which I will bring to you when I come home. I don't wish to entrust them to the mail for fear of their being lost as the large scale map could scarcely be replaced. It is the one given me by the French officer at Remoncourt and shows the small pine grove, the Capelle de la Grenade and has the German and French lines and positions marked in blue and red respectively.

We also took pictures of Remoncourt and Embermeuil, but as that film is not developed at this time, I will either send them later or bring them with me.

A French boy of 17 years by the name of Charles Lavaux, who lives in Remoncourt, accompanied us from there. If you should ever visit the scene, he would make an excellent guide.

Carl's squadron is now at Coblenz and if there is any way to arrange such a trip I shall go there and visit with some of his former comrades.

As to the date of my return to the States, I know no more now than I did when I wrote you before but sincerely hope it will be soon. In the meantime if there are any questions you wish answered, write me and I'll be glad to give you any information I may possess.

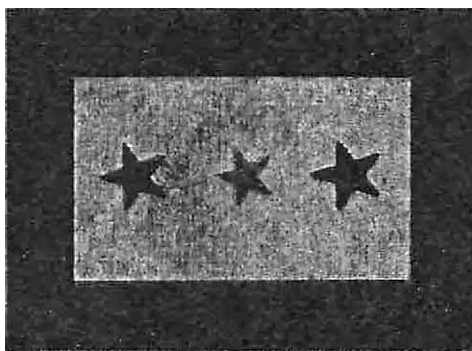
Trusting that the photographs and such information as I have given herewith may be a comfort to you.

I am,

Very sincerely yours,

CAPT. J. M. BREARTON.

Toul, France, February 24, 1919.





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AIR FORCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
<http://aupress.au.af.mil>

ISBN 978-1-58566-255-5

